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ABSTRACT

This unit uses a case study of the Kingdom of the Kongo (Congo) to answer questions about the trans-Atlantic slave trade from an African perspective. The unit is appropriate for use in any study of the history of sub-Saharan Africa. Because it focuses on the African perspective of events surrounding the slave trade, it supports in-depth studies of the slave trade or slavery in general. The unit contains objectives, correlations to the National History Standards, teacher background materials, lesson plans, student resources, and a selected bibliography. The six lessons focus on working with primary source documents to understand the complexity of the slave trade, tracing events from 1488, the date of first contact between Africans of the Congo River region with the Portuguese. The unit includes a set of short historical fiction integrated into five of the six lessons. These stories recount the experiences of individuals who witnessed the encounter between Kongo and the Portuguese. Although the lessons are recommended for grades 7-11, they can be adapted for other grade levels. An 11-item bibliography concludes the unit. (BT)

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Kongo

A Kingdom Divided

A Unit of Study for Grades 7–11

Ernest L. O'Roark

and

Eileen E. Wood

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HISTORY IN THE SCHOOLS
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Kongo

A Kingdom Divided

A Unit of Study for Grades 7–11

by

Ernest L. O'Roark

and

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Acknowledgments

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We carry within us the wonders we seek without us:
There is all Africa and her prodigies in us.

—Sir Thomas Browne, from *Religio Medici*, 1643

Introduction

Approach and Rationale

Kongo: A Kingdom Divided is one of over sixty teaching units published by the National Center for History in the Schools that are the fruits of collaborations between history professors and experienced teachers of both United States and World History. The units represent specific issues and dramatic episodes in history from which you and your students can pause to delve into the deeper meanings of these selected landmark events and explore their wider context in the great historical narrative. By studying a crucial turning point in history, the student becomes aware that choices had to be made by real human beings, that those decisions were the result of specific factors, and that they set in motion a series of historical consequences. We have selected issues and dramatic moments that best bring alive that decision-making process. We hope that through this approach, your students will realize that history is an ongoing, open-ended process, and that the decisions they make today create the conditions of tomorrow's history.

Our teaching units are based on primary sources, taken from government documents, artifacts, journals, diaries, newspapers, magazines, literature, contemporary photographs, paintings, and other art from the period under study. What we hope to achieve using primary source documents in these lessons is to remove the distance that students feel from historical events and to connect them more intimately with the past. In this way we hope to recreate for your students a sense of 'being there,' a sense of seeing history through the eyes of the very people who were making decisions. This will help your students develop historical empathy, to realize that history is not an impersonal process divorced from real people like themselves. At the same time, by analyzing primary sources, students will actually practice the historian's craft, discovering for themselves how to analyze evidence, establish a valid interpretation, and construct a coherent narrative in which all the relevant factors play a part.

Content and Organization

Within this unit, you will find: Teaching Background Materials, including Unit Overview, Unit Context, Correlation to the National Standards for History, Unit Objectives, and Introduction to *Kongo: A Kingdom Divided*; A Dramatic Moment; and Lesson Plans with Student Resources. This unit, as we have said above, focuses on certain key moments in time and should be used as a supplement to your customary course materials. Although these lessons are recommended for use by grades 7–11, they can be adapted for other grade levels.

The Teacher Background section should provide you with a good overview of the entire unit and with the historical information and context necessary to link the specific Dramatic Moment to the larger historical narrative. You may consult it for your

own use, and you may choose to share it with students if they are of a sufficient grade level to understand the materials.

The Lesson Plans include a variety of ideas and approaches for the teacher which can be elaborated upon or cut as you see the need. These lesson plans contain student resources which accompany each lesson. The resources consist of primary source documents, any handouts or student background materials, and a bibliography.

An unusual feature of this unit, *Kongo: A Kingdom Divided*, is a set of short historical fiction pieces integrated into five of the six lessons. These stories recount the experiences of individuals, some fictional and some modeled on historical figures, who experienced the encounter between Kongo and the Portuguese. Based on careful research into the cultural and historical setting, these selections transport students back to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Ernest O'Rourke and Eileen Wood, the teacher-authors of the unit, wrote these creative stories.

In our series of teaching units, each collection can be taught in several ways. You can teach all of the lessons offered on any given topic, or you can select and adapt the ones that best support your particular course needs. We have not attempted to be comprehensive or prescriptive in our offerings, but rather to give you an array of enticing possibilities for in-depth study, at varying grade levels. We hope that you will find the lesson plans exciting and stimulating for your classes. We also hope that your students will never again see history as a boring sweep of facts and meaningless dates but rather as an endless treasure of real life stories and an exercise in analysis and reconstruction.

Teacher Background Materials

I. Unit Overview

The story of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, its atrocities and profound consequences, has been told many times. But almost always, the story has been told from a European perspective or that of Africans after their arrival in the Americas. Of what went on in Africa, we have been told little and that has often been simplified to the point of inaccuracy. According to most Western accounts, Europeans came to Africa in search of gold and other trade but soon found the commerce in human lives more profitable. The result was a prolonged and brutal period of systematic depopulation of those parts of Africa within reach of the European and American slavers. While basically true, this simplistic account leaves too many questions unanswered. Why couldn't the people of Africa and their leaders have prevented this tragedy? What was their perspective on the slave trade? What was their role? Was the slave trade a one-sided assault perpetrated on the people of Africa by foreigners with superior military technology? Or was there more to the story?

This case study of the Kingdom of Kongo attempts to answer these questions. By the end of this unit, students will understand that the slave trade was a complex creature, born and sustained by a web of motives—greed, religion, political necessity—all brought on by destabilizing influences resulting from early African contacts with Europe. Ironically, many of these early contacts were, for the most part, well intentioned overtures for the purposes of commerce and conversion, with mutual benefit as the stated objective. But the destabilizing effects of the European presence in African kingdoms resulted in conflicts within those kingdoms. These domestic conflicts, in turn, became the fuel that kept the fires of slavery burning for more than three hundred years.

II. Unit Context

This unit is appropriate for use in any study of the history of sub-Saharan Africa. Because it focuses on the African perspective of events surrounding the trans-Atlantic slave trade, it also supports in-depth studies of the slave trade or slavery in general. In addition, study of the Age of Exploration, its causes and consequences, could make use of these materials.

III. Correlation to the National History Standards

Kongo: A Kingdom Divided correlates with the *National Standards for History*, Basic Edition (National Center for History in the Schools, UCLA, 1996), **Era 6**, "Global Expansion and Encounter, 1450–1770." Specific standards addressed by the lessons include: **Standard 1A** dealing with the origins and

consequences of European overseas expansion, **1B** on encounters between Europeans and the peoples of sub-Saharan Africa, **4B** on the origins and consequences of the trans-Atlantic African slave trade, and **4C** dealing with patterns of change in Africa in the era of the slave trade. The activities in this unit also touch on **Standard 6**, relating to major global trends from 1450–1770, specifically regarding the extent and limitations of European political power and the growth and spread of Christianity.

IV. Unit Objectives

- To understand the opportunities and conflicts created when two very different cultures make contact for the first time.
- To read texts and maps to better understand the physical and cultural geography of a region.
- To read and interpret primary source documents.
- To identify and interpret the historical elements of fictional pieces.
- To use role-playing to simulate the workings of a political system.
- To understand the complexities of the trans-Atlantic slave trade from an African perspective.
- To use information from the unit to construct a short, well-organized essay.

V. Historical Introduction to *Kongo: A Kingdom Divided*

From 1500 B.C.E., small groups of Bantu-speaking people began migrating south and east from a region south of the Sahara near present-day Cameroon. By 350 B.C.E., Bantu populations were firmly established in the savanna region near the Congo (formerly Zaire) River in what is today northern Angola. There they cultivated the land, raised animals, made iron tools and weapons, and developed a complex social and political system.

The Kingdom of Kongo was formed around 1375. Legend tells of a ruling class who originated in the region around the Congo River, established a political base at Mbanza Kongo, and from this capital added provinces: some joining voluntarily, others through conquest. Those that submitted voluntarily remained under the control of their original rulers. Those conquered were placed under control of family and friends of the all-powerful *mwene kongo* (*manikongo*), or king of Kongo.

At its height, the Kingdom of Kongo stretched from the Congo River in the north to the Kwanza River in the south and from the Atlantic Ocean to beyond the Nkisi River in the east, covering more than 80,000 square miles of land and containing more than 500,000 inhabitants. Trade based on agricultural production and the mining of iron and copper, the two main economic activities of the region, flourished. Over time, the kingdom grew wealthy through a system of taxation that financed the king's household, army, and government, and by tribute payments made to the king by the governors of each province. This was the civilization that the Europeans found when they landed on the shores of Kongo in the late fifteenth century.

In 1483, a ship from an expedition sent by the Portuguese king João II to find a sea route to Asia arrived at the mouth of the Congo River. Its captain, Portuguese explorer Diogo Cão, immediately sent a delegation to the Kongolese king, who lived several days journey away. Electing to stay close to his ship, Cão awaited their return. On the sandy beach, he planted a padrão, or stone pillar, that he had brought with him from Portugal to commemorate his arrival. Then he explored the surrounding area. After weeks of waiting for his men to return, Cão feared for their safety. He seized several Kongolese hostages and sent word to the king that the hostages would be delivered safely back to Kongo on his next voyage if his delegation was returned to him alive and well. He then sailed back to Portugal with his hostages.

Cão returned to the Congo River in 1488, bringing back the hostages and picking up the Portuguese who had in fact been treated as honored guests by the Kongolese during their long stay. This exchange was the beginning of a 500 year relationship between the kingdoms of Portugal and Kongo. Other expeditions soon followed. The Portuguese brought traders, craftsmen, and Christian missionaries to Kongo and close relations were soon established between the two kingdoms. Nzinga a Nkuwu, the Kongolese king, adopted the Portuguese name, João I, converted to Christianity in 1491, and helped spread the Catholic religion throughout his state. The Kongolese government was soon reorganized after the Portuguese one and its capital, Mbanza Kongo, renamed São Salvador. After João's death, his son, King Afonso I, looked to the Portuguese for help in dealing with factions within Kongo that were threatening his power. But the Portuguese seemed more interested in growing wealthy, primarily through the business of buying and selling Africans as slaves. Afonso had to contend with mounting Portuguese pressure to provide more and more slaves for plantations in the New World in exchange for their support. In 1526, Afonso wrote to the king of Portugal to ask him to end the slave trade, indeed all trade. Later that year, he wrote again, repeating many of his complaints about the Portuguese but agreeing to allow the slave trade to continue under a new system of royal supervision. The Portuguese ruler may not have

responded directly. In any case, as the transatlantic slave trade grew, so did the tension between the two kingdoms.

When Afonso died, a struggle over succession ensued between his son, Pedro, and his grandson, Diogo. With the help of a powerful *kanda*, or political faction, Diogo was able to succeed his grandfather as king. For nearly a century following Afonso's death, Kongo continued to thrive.

The Portuguese, however, had shifted the focus of their efforts from Kongo to Ndongo (Angola) to the south, detaching this formerly tributary kingdom from Kongo. From that base in 1665, they sent a military force into Kongo, defeating its forces in the Battle of Mbwila and killing King Antonio I and many members of the nobility. The battle also triggered a prolonged civil war between rival *kandas* which had members who claimed the throne. The capital of São Salvador was destroyed, villages abandoned, and hundreds of thousands of prisoners taken and later sold as slaves to Europeans for export to the Americas.

In the midst of these civil wars arose Beatriz Kimpa Vita, a formidable woman who founded a religious movement which taught that Christ was born of an African slave woman and that Kongo was the true Holy Land. She denounced all the rival contenders to the throne and promised to restore the old capital of Mbanza Kongo and rebuild the Kongo state. She predicted a glorious future. The common people, tired of having their crops destroyed, being drafted into armies, fighting and dying for the claims of rival *kandas*, or being sold into slavery and transported away from their country, flocked to the capital, repopulating the old city. Many became followers of Doña Beatriz. The Catholic Church in Kongo, however, denounced her teachings as heresy and demanded that the king silence her. In 1706, King Pedro IV captured Beatriz and had her burned at the stake as a heretic.

After this, the kingdom never regained its former power. Though it remained independent, periods of turmoil grew more frequent. Over the next two hundred years, the kingdom broke up into small independent provinces ruled by local chiefs, many of whom grew wealthy through the slave trade. In 1885, Kongo's territory was incorporated into Portuguese Angola.

Doña Beatriz
Father Bernardo da Gallo, 1710

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VI. Lessons

1. First Contact
2. The Return
3. A Distant Partner
4. Sanctuary
5. The Kandas
6. Mad Dog

Dramatic Moment

In the year of . . . 1482 since the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the most serene, most excellent and potent prince, King D. João of Portugal, did order this land to be discovered and these padrãos to be set up by D. Cão, an esquire of his household.

—inscription found on the stone padrão, or pillar, erected at the mouth of the Congo River by the Portuguese explorer, Diogo Cão

Photo of inscriptions attesting to the arrival of the Portuguese in Matadi (a port on the Congo [Zaire] River) in 1488. The inscriptions include names of Diogo Cão and several members of his expedition.

Source: Jean Cuvelier, *L'ancien royaume de Congo; fondation, découverte, première évangélisation de l'ancien royaume de Congo, règne du grand roi Affonso Mvemba Nzinga (1541)* (Bruges, Desclée de Brouwer, 1946).

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Lesson One
First Contact

A. Objective

- Students will describe geographic and cultural characteristics of Kongo in 1483.

B. Lesson Activities (Completion Time: 1–2 days)

1. Introductory Class Discussion

Ask students if they have ever seen a science fiction movie or read a book about people meeting beings from another world for the very first time. Have volunteers name a few examples and briefly summarize the main points of the plot. List titles on the board or overhead. (Answers might include books such as *The War of the Worlds* by H. G. Wells or *Childhood's End* by Arthur C. Clarke. Films might include *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *ET*, *Contact*, *Independence Day*, and *Star Trek: First Contact*.)

Ask students to identify the main conflicts or challenges commonly found in these stories. List these separately on the board or overhead. (Students may cite issues such as communication or lack thereof, suspicion vs. trust, fear of the unknown, the impact of new ideas and technologies on society, war and conquest, and an "us vs. them" mentality.)

Explain that if and when such a "first contact" ever occurs, it will not be the first time that humans have gone through this sort of experience. It has happened many times in history. (Indeed our present modern period may be rather unique in its lack of such contacts.) As in the stories that were listed, these early "first contacts" created great conflicts and made an enormous impact on both societies involved. Explain that in this unit one of these "first contacts" will be investigated in detail.

2. Historical Fiction: "First Contact"

Hand out "First Contact" (**Student Handout 1**) and briefly explain the nature of historical fiction. Then have students read the story. They may enjoy reading it orally like a play with individual students assigned to read dialogue for a specific character.

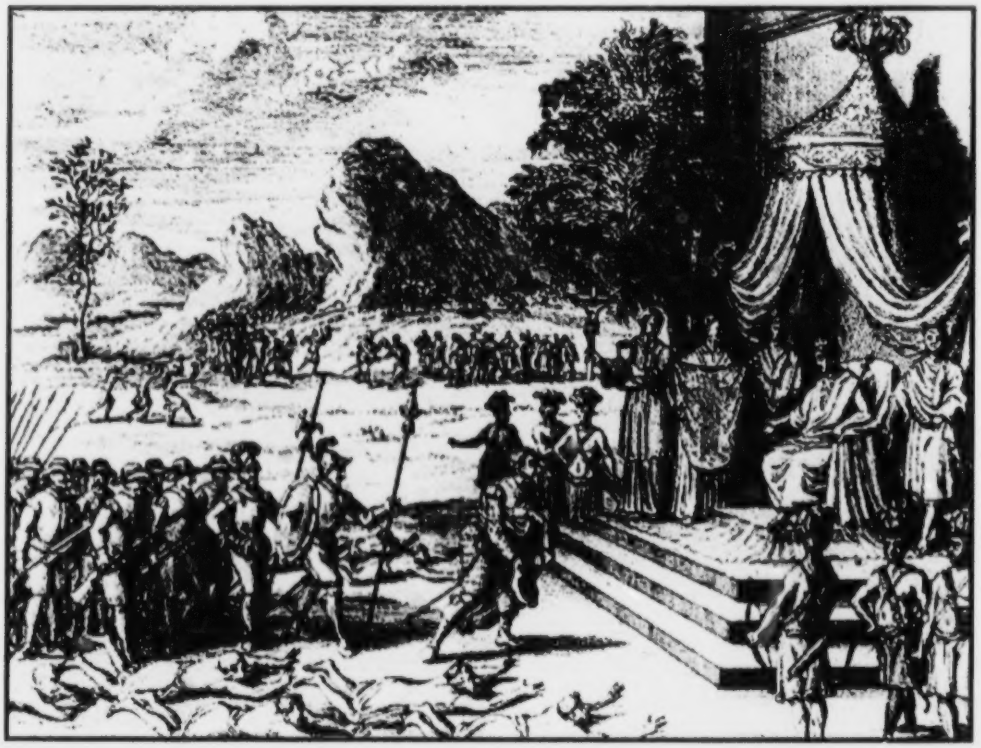
3. "The Portuguese Arrive in Kongo"

Pass out the primary source document, "The Portuguese Arrive in Kongo" (**Document A**) and have students, in small groups or individually, summarize

the meaning of each paragraph in standard modern English. In a brief full-class discussion, have students share their interpretations.

4. A Stone Pillar—Small group activity

Give out **Student Handout 2**, "A Stone Pillar" and have students work in small groups to discuss and complete this activity. In a follow-up discussion, have students share their ideas. In this discussion, students should be able to articulate the following: a lack of clear communication made the initial contact difficult. Diogo Cão's decision to abduct a group of Kongolese was both a solution to the problem and a provocation which could result in violent conflict. While each side saw an opportunity for trade and an exchange of knowledge, neither completely trusted the other. According to the primary source, Portuguese intentions were peaceful and meant to benefit both kingdoms. Still, some people among the Kongolese were wary of such contact and the potential changes that might result.



The King of the Kongo receiving a delegation of Europeans in the era of Portuguese expansion.
Available: http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~wldciv/brians_syllabus/42.html

First Contact

Historical Fiction

Central Africa, 1483

The intense heat of the afternoon was broken as dark clouds blotted out the sun and large, cool drops of rain introduced a coming storm. To the boy and his elder companion who walked along the level, sandy path, the rain was a welcome relief. Pausing, the man gazed out across the tall, wild grasslands that bordered the path.

"You said it was *not far*. I must teach you something about distance, my young nephew. What is 'not far' to a child can be a *long way* for his old uncle!"

Kinu looked up at his uncle and smiled broadly. 'Old' was not a term he would use to describe Lukeni. Tall and muscular like Kinu's father, Lukeni had the handsome features and proud bearing of a Kongo warrior. No, in spite of the few threads of gray woven into his hair, Kinu's uncle was like the great rocks of the earth. Time had little effect on him.

"Hurry, uncle! Father told me to bring you quickly. What we found is so strange, he wants you to see it for yourself before it is found by others."

Lukeni eyed the boy doubtfully. "Kitima is the most clever man in the province. Everyone says so. But your father is also a dreamer, Kinu. Sometimes he does not see the difference between a thing of great importance and a minor curiosity."

"With other things that may be true, Uncle, but this is different. Come. Truly, it cannot be far now. The beach is just ahead."

Lukeni smiled down at his tireless nine-year-old nephew and sighed. "Lead on, Kinu."

Thunder rumbled in the distance and, as if in response, the rain began to fall in earnest. Strong gusts of wind whipped the surrounding fields into rippling waves of green. In minutes the sandy soil was saturated and deep puddles began to form in the path ahead. Lukeni shook his head as he trudged after Kinu, who was happily splashing his way toward their mysterious objective. "This had better be worthwhile, my brother," he mumbled under his breath.

Soon the rhythmic crashing of ocean waves could be heard above the storm's dull roar. The path led them over a low rise and into the wooded fringes of a narrow, sandy beach. There, standing in a small cleared area among the trees, was the strange object Kinu had brought his uncle to see — a great pillar of solid stone topped by a slender cross.

"See uncle? Isn't it odd? Whatever can it be? Who would have made such a thing? And why would they leave it here?"

Lukeni frowned and rubbed his chin thoughtfully. "Hmm. I don't know. I have never seen anything like it before. Maybe it is a marker of some kind, but what purpose would someone have in marking this beach? There is nothing special here that I know of. Where is your father?"

Shielding his eyes with his hand, Kinu squinted into the wind-driven rain. His father was nowhere to be seen.

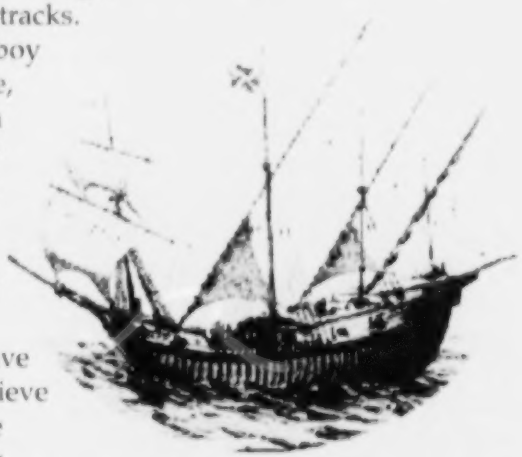
Lukeni pointed up the beach to their right. "The mouth of the river is only a short distance north of here. Perhaps he went that way in search of those who left this . . . this . . . thing. That would be just like your father."

"Right, uncle! Let's go find him!"

Without waiting for reply, Kinu sprinted up the beach toward the wide mouth of the Congo River. Lukeni took a last long look at the tall stone pillar then turned and followed his nephew.

Although a steady rain continued, the storm had weakened by the time the pair reached the river bank. There, Lukeni spotted footprints leading inland. Kinu, grinning from ear to ear, was delighted by the prospect of "tracking" his father. Lukeni nodded his permission and Kinu led the way, stealthily stalking his prey.

They had not gone far when Kinu, rounding a slight bend in the path, suddenly froze in his tracks. "Uncle, look! A boat! A *giant* boat!" the boy shouted. Lukeni hurried to Kinu's side. There, anchored near shore was a large wooden vessel with tall masts. Just ahead on the river bank, a group of people gathered under the shelter of a clump of low mangrove trees.



A Portuguese ship of the 15th century

Sketch from http://www.wsu.edu:8000/wcivil/ea/ea/aa07.jpg

Kinu could hardly contain his excitement. "Uncle, what kind of boat is that? To which village does it belong?"

"I don't know. It is unlike any boat I have ever seen. But wherever it came from, I believe we have found both your father and the answer to our mystery. Let's go see what your father has to say about all of this." Then he added more sternly, "There may be danger, Kinu, so stay behind me."

As they approached, there was a stir among the group gathered under the trees. Kitima emerged from the group and ran to greet his brother and son. Kinu, forgetting his uncle's instruction, ran to meet his father. Without breaking his stride, Kitima scooped the boy up under one arm and carried him to where Lukeni waited. "Greetings, brother! I knew you would find us. You've always been the best hunter in the family."

"*I* tracked you!" Kinu added emphatically from under Kitima's arm.

Lukeni pointed at the large boat that sat gently rocking a short distance away. "What is going on here, Kitima? Who are these visitors? Where do they come from?"

"I'm not sure, brother, but it must be very far away. We are having great difficulty communicating with them. They seem quite nervous. I am afraid you will scare them." Glancing back at the grove of trees he added, "I think you may already have."

Lukeni eyed the boat suspiciously. "Are you sure they are no danger to us? How do you know this is not some sort of invasion?"

"They have weapons, but there are too few of them to be a serious threat. They seem genuinely friendly, and very curious. Come, and I will show them to you."

Kinu giggled as his father lifted him onto his broad shoulders. "Child, it seems you

get heavier every day! Soon I will not be able to carry you like this!" Kinu laughed, enjoying the ride as Kitima walked casually back to the grove of trees. Lukeni followed close behind.

When they reached the dark shadows beneath the grove, Kitima lowered Kinu to the ground. There, the fishermen and rice-farmers of a neighboring village were gathered around a group of seven or eight of the visitors. Kinu was fascinated by the visitors' appearance. Their strange, heavy, ill-fitting clothing and long, straight hair made it obvious that they were from somewhere very far away. It appeared that the strangers were trying, by means of hand-signs and crude pictures drawn in the soft earth, to communicate with a small gray-haired man from the village.

"That is Masaki," explained Kitima, "chief of the village nearest this place. He is trying to make sense of what the outsiders are saying."

Soon the conversation, if it could be called that, ended and Masaki came to discuss matters with Kitima and Lukeni. "These men speak a language completely unknown to us and none of them speaks Kikongo. They brought with them some men who look more like us and who act as translators. Unfortunately, we cannot understand the translators any more than we can understand the others. Communication has been . . . well . . . very difficult."

"Difficult or not, you must have learned *something*," Lukeni insisted. "How long have they been here? What do they want? What is the stone thing they put on the beach?"

Masaki smiled calmly. "Have patience, Lukeni. Getting to know these people will be a slow process. But we have learned the answers to some of your questions already. They have been here four days. They want to meet the King of Kongo and give him presents. I have tried to explain that the king lives far away, but I'm not sure they understand. We have sent for the Lord of Soyo. Perhaps, as the king's representative in this province, he will know best what to do."

While they waited for the Lord of Soyo to arrive, the visitors and the villagers attempted to learn more about one another. The foreigners were eager for everyone to visit their tall wooden boat. They seemed very proud of it. At first, some villagers were timid about going on board. But when they saw others go and come back safe and happy, they felt reassured. Soon, almost everyone had been taken aboard for a visit.

Kinu could hardly wait for his turn. When he got aboard, the strangers allowed him to explore all the ship's passages and tiny rooms to his heart's content. It was, Kinu concluded, a magnificent vessel—a magic machine capable of transporting people to other worlds. Kitima was equally impressed. Lukeni, on the other hand, remained cautious. He was one of the few who declined the invitation to visit the ship.

Before long, some villagers began bringing valuables to trade with the strangers. The difference in language proved to be no barrier to trade. The visitors liked the ivory the villagers offered and traded some of their beautiful cloth for it.

On the second day after the discovery of the strangers, the Lord of Soyo and his attendants arrived. They met with Kitima, Masaki, and Lukeni, and discussed what had been learned so far. Like almost everyone else, the Lord of Soyo toured the great ship. Finally, it was decided that a delegation of five of the foreigners would be taken inland to meet with the King of Kongo. The leader of the visitors, a man called Diogo Cão, counted out on his fingers to show the number of days that should pass before he expected his delegation to return. As usual, communication was difficult, but the Lord

of Soyo seemed to understand his meaning.

They left the following morning, laden with gifts for the king. There was little to do then but wait, so Kinu, his father, and his uncle returned to their village. But from time to time in the coming weeks they would return to the river to check on the visitors, to trade, and to learn more about them. Still, much remained a mystery, including the solitary pillar on the beach.

Eventually, the day came when the delegation was expected to return. There was excitement in the air. Everyone was anxious to hear of the king's reaction to the arrival of visitors from another world. But the delegation did not return that day—nor the next—or the one after that. A week passed—then two, with no word from Diogo's delegation. It was clear to everyone that the visitors from the ship were growing more and more concerned about their overdue friends.

Kitima and many others tried their best to reassure the strangers that the people of Kongo wished only to be their friends and that no harm had come to the delegation. Still, this was difficult to communicate, and even the villagers couldn't help but wonder why the delegation had been so long delayed.

One clear, breezy morning, well into the fourth week since the delegation's departure, Kinu awoke to find that his father had left very early to meet with Diogo aboard the great ship. Quickly, Kinu devoured his breakfast and prepared to set out for the river. No sooner had he gone out the door of their sturdy wooden house when he was brought up short by his mother's loud, clear voice. "Not today, Kinu. Your father can conduct business with the visitors without your assistance for once. I'm going to make some new water jugs and cooking pots today. You will help me."

Pottery-making was a difficult, messy business and not among Kinu's favorite activities. "Mother, pot-making is women's work! I should not be made to do such things at my age! I'll be a man soon."

Suddenly Lukeni's commanding voice resounded from the house next door and immediately Kinu knew he was in trouble. "Kinu!" Lukeni bellowed. "Do not dare to argue with your mother! Anxious as you may be for it, manhood is some years away for you yet. Do as your mother asks." Kinu did as his mother asked.

Several hours later, Kinu was elbow deep in wet clay when a man from the neighboring village came running and shouting from the direction of the river. Kinu could not make out the words, but the urgent tone of the man's voice filled him with a sense of dread. After hastily rinsing the clay from his arms, he hurried to where the man now stood, breathlessly delivering his message.

"They've gone! The visitors have gone! Not long after first light, as the tide went out and the wind strengthened, they raised the great iron anchor and let out their sails. Like massive wings are their sails! Like a great white bird the ship seemed to fly across the water!"

By now Lukeni had arrived. "My brother went early this morning to meet with their leader, Diogo. Where is he now?"

The man lowered his eyes. "That is why I ran here as fast as I could to deliver this news, Lukeni." The man paused and took a deep breath. "The strangers have taken Kitima with them along with three other noblemen from our village."

A gasp of dismay went up from the gathered villagers. Kinu's mother, who had

come to stand beside him, made no sound but gripped Kinu's shoulder tightly. Tears welled up in Kinu's eyes, blurring his vision. Lukeni was the first to speak. "I *knew* they should not be trusted! Those cowardly criminals have kidnapped my brother! How could you let them . . ."

"Wait, Lukeni. There is . . . more." The man's voice quavered slightly as he stood nervously before the angry Lukeni. "Your brother and the others went aboard the ship and then Diogo and some of his men came ashore to talk to us. Diogo counted out on his fingers indicating, we think, the passage of time according to the moon. Fifteen months, he counted, if we understood him rightly. Then through gestures and signs and the few words we have learned, he seemed to say that he would bring our people back to us at the end of that time. And he indicated they would be gifted with great honor and wealth."

"Lies! How could you have let him go?" Lukeni growled.

Nimi, the wise blacksmith of the village, stepped forward. A large man, with bulging muscles and a soft voice, he was about the same age as Lukeni and an old friend. "Lukeni, I know it is tempting in light of what we have just heard, but we must not let anger overwhelm our reason. We must tell the Lord of Soyo and the King of Kongo what has happened here. Remember, somewhere between them, they hold the delegation of strangers. If you are right, Lukeni, and Diogo's words were lies, then the king will see that the strangers pay the price for their leader's crime. They will die." Turning to Kinu, he continued, "But if Diogo did not lie, then Kinu's father and the others will surely return in fifteen months. And perhaps he will have wonderful things to say of his journey. Fifteen months — then we will know the truth."

Kinu stared out across the flat open fields in the direction of the river. The tears in his eyes blurred the scene before him into nothing more than patterns of color. "Uncle," he said haltingly, "Uncle, they say that the sea is what lies between this world and the one to which we go when we die. Does that mean my father is dead?"

"No, Kinu, and do not think such things. *We* have work to do."

"What? What can we do? We have no great boat. We could never catch . . ."

"That is true. And so we are not going to try to chase them. No, we must go directly to the king. He must be told what has happened here, and he should hear it from us, not some messenger. We must find the strangers who went to see the king and find out from them all we can." Lukeni bent down to look his young nephew in the eyes. Brushing a tear from Kinu's cheek with one finger, he added, "Fifteen months is a long time, Kinu, but there is much to be done. We will go to the capital. Only in Mbanza Kongo will we get the answers we seek."

They departed that same afternoon. With a determination born of anger, Lukeni set a pace that astonished Kinu and saw them entering Mbanza Kongo in less than a week. As Lukeni had predicted, the king was enraged by the news Lukeni delivered. Immediately the king ordered the foreign delegation, who up to this time, he had been entertaining as honored guests, to be held under house arrest. As the bewildered foreigners were led away, the king announced angrily, "I will have no more to do with them until I have my people safely back! I will not listen any more to their words of friendship or religion. If, in fifteen months my people are not returned, these visitors will pay with their lives!"

Lukeni and his family were invited by the king to take up residence in Mbanza Kongo so that they could be close at hand should any news arrive concerning those who were abducted. Kinu decided to try and learn more by visiting the now-imprisoned strangers and working to learn their language. Through long hours of trading and practicing vocabulary, Kinu was able to slowly extract the incredible reality that had so long been hidden from him by the walls of language and culture. The stangers were from a kingdom far to the north called Portugal. Like Kongo, Portugal faced the sea, and so the Portuguese had worked to master the sea by building great ships that could travel far beyond the horizon. Such ships had been sent by their king to find African gold as well as a way around Africa so that they could trade with rich kingdoms on the other side of the world. They had found Africa to be a very large and fascinating place. And so, while continuing to search for this trade route, they had taken time to make contact with the people they found along the way.

Again and again, the Portuguese insisted that they meant no harm and that Diogo Cão would surely keep his promise to return the people he had taken away. Kinu very much wanted to believe the Portuguese, but Lukeni constantly cautioned him against putting too much faith in the words of foreigners.

As more and more of the Portuguese language became clear to Kinu, the visitors began to speak to him enthusiastically of their "Christian" religion. More than anything else, they seemed to want the Kongo people to learn about and adopt this religion. Since it helped him learn the language, Kinu patiently listened to their rambling lectures, but little of what the Portuguese said concerning religion made much sense to him. Again and again, though, the Portuguese spoke fervently of a cross, and Kinu remembered the slender cross that sat atop the solitary stone pillar on the beach. Perhaps, he thought, the pillar was some sort of monument to their religion.

Whatever it's true meaning, Kinu sensed that the appearance of the stone pillar marked the beginning of big changes for Kongo. At the end of fifteen months they would know whether these changes were good or evil.

The Portuguese Arrive in Kongo

In 1483, a Portuguese ship, captained by Diogo Cão, reached the mouth of the Congo River. Cão and those with whom he sailed were the first Europeans to make contact with the people of Kongo. They journeyed there, not to conquer the kingdom, but to establish trade relations and introduce Christianity. The following account of this "first contact" comes from Rui de Pinà's 1515 chronicle of the life and reign of the Portuguese king, João II. Pinà was the Portuguese royal archivist.

Museu Militar, Lisboa

Diogo Cão

After following this dangerous and difficult coast, the [Portuguese] fleet arrived at the land of Kongo, which is distant from the Kingdom of Portugal by more than 1,700 leagues. As the distance was so great . . . from Guinea, which had been already discovered and known, they were not able to understand the people of the kingdom, which were without number, with the linguists and interpreters with whom they were well provided.

The Captain [Diogo Cão] with the industry and orders of the [Portuguese] king to secure these people and win their confidence, sent Christian messengers with a rich present of various things to the King of Kongo, who was well in the interior [of the country] telling him that the people of this fleet were of the King of Portugal, who has peace and friendship with all the world, and wishes to have it with [the King of Kongo] and all his people . . . The messengers were treated honorably by the king and received . . . with such joy and had such questions that they did not want to leave.

The Captain believed because of the long delay that they made, that [his messengers] had been detained or were dead, and seeing that the Blacks of the country trusted him and entered the boats confidently, decided not to wait for the messengers and left [Kongo] with some of those Blacks. Those who came first to trust him and came on the fleet were not allowed to go on shore, but went with him to Portugal. He did not bring them as captives, but as foundations and hopes, that after they had learned the language and customs and manners of the king and kingdom of Portugal, they would be returned to their land, and by their means both parties could communicate with each other. This was not possible otherwise because of the differences in languages. Before he left, the Captain promised the people that he would return within 15 months . . . and bring them back with great honor and wealth.

And for all this time the Christian messengers stayed in the country. But the King of Kongo was upset by this, and thinking that this was not true, promised at the end of this time, if it did not come true, he would kill the messengers, even though he had socialized with them, would not see them again.

Source: António Brásio, ed., *Monumenta Missionaria Africana*, 1° Series, vol. 1 (Lisbon: Agencia Geral do Ultramar, 1952–88). Selection translated by John Thornton.

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"First Contact" Worksheet

Directions

Discuss with the members of your group the positive and negative aspects of a "first contact" situation. What are the possible advantages or gains that might result from such contact? What are the possible disadvantages or dangers? Record your discussion on the chart below. Write positive aspects under the plus symbol and negative aspects under the minus symbol.

+	−

Discussion Questions

Consider the situation in Kongo in 1483 in light of your discussion, then answer these questions.

1. Imagine that you are one of the villagers in the story. Would your reaction to the arrival of the strangers have been more like Kitima's (Kinu's father) or more like Lukeni's (Kinu's uncle)? Explain your thinking.

2. According to the primary source document, what were Portuguese intentions in Kongo? What did they wish to accomplish? Were their intentions peaceful? Use evidence from the document to support your answer.

3. The primary source document was written by a Portuguese archivist working for the king of Portugal. How might this affect the accuracy of what he recorded? Describe anything that you think might have been inaccurate or exaggerated in this document and explain your thinking.

Lesson Two
The Return

A. Objectives

- To locate Portugal and Kongo on a map and describe their relative locations.
- To describe physical and geographic characteristics of Kongo.
- To use primary source readings to describe the Kingdom of Kongo as seen by Diogo Cão.
- To describe changes in Kongo that followed soon after the return of Diogo Cão.

B. Lesson Activities (Completion Time: 1–2 days)

1. Introductory Class Discussion

Quickly review "Historical Fiction: First Contact" from **Student Handout 1, Lesson One**. Then ask students to think about how first contact ended and to decide for themselves whether or not it was likely that Diogo Cão would have returned to Kongo with his captives within fifteen months as promised.

Survey the class by a show of hands and record the outcome on the board. Have student volunteers from each side briefly share reasons for their decision. In the course of this discussion, students should begin to verbalize the fact that many factors about which they know little might have affected the outcome. For example, how long was the trip from Kongo to Portugal?

Explain to student that in the next set of activities they will examine some of these geographic factors to get a clearer idea of the setting for the story and to better understand what actually happened and why.

2. Geography Activities

Distribute to students copies of "Kongo Geography" (**Document B**) and the maps titled "Diogo Cão's Voyage of Exploration" (**Student Handout 3**) and "The Kingdom of Kongo" (**Student Handout 4**). **Student Handout 5**, "Central Africa," may be used as a reference to the modern countries mentioned in **Document B**. Use these resources to complete tasks such as:

Measure the distance in miles along Diogo Cão's route from Portugal to Kongo.

Using cardinal and intermediate compass directions (north, south, northwest, southeast, etc.) describe in complete sentences Diogo Cão's route from Portugal to Kongo.

Measure the distance in miles from the equator to the point of first contact at the mouth of the Congo River.

Use the reading "Kongo Geography" (**Document B**) to locate at least two pieces of evidence to support or refute the following statement: Although Cão arrived in winter, the climate he encountered was far different from what Americans are accustomed to for that season.

Measure the distance in miles from the mouth of the Congo River in Soyo Province to the capital city of Mbanza Kongo.

3. Historical Fiction: "The Return"

Hand out "The Return" (**Student Handout 6**). Before reading the story, briefly review students' predictions and instruct them to look for specific consequences or outcomes of the events depicted in the story. The reading may be done individually or orally as with "First Contact." Discuss with students how the story either confirmed or differed from their earlier predictions.

Give students copies of the primary source document "The King of Kongo" (**Document C**). Have them use both the primary source and the story to create a list of changes that began to take place in Kongo as a result of relations with Portugal.

As an assignment or in a discussion, have students deal with questions such as:

1. Were the relations between Portugal and Kongo friendly? Support your answer with evidence from the readings.

2. Were the changes taking place in Kongo positive or negative? Support your answer with evidence from the readings.

3. Kitima and Lukeni strongly disagree about the emerging relationship with Portugal. With whom do you agree? Explain your answer.

4. Predict what will happen next in the story. How would Kongo look twenty or thirty years from the end of "The Return?" What changes might take place?

Kongo Geography

As Diogo Cão guided his caravel up the choppy waters of the Congo estuary, he and his men sailed deeper and deeper into the heart of the Kingdom of Kongo. This kingdom, never before seen by Europeans, was located on the western coast of central Africa and included parts of what are today the Congo Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire), and Angola. The northern boundary of the kingdom was formed by the lower 200 miles of the Congo River, the eastern boundary by the Nkisi River. The kingdom extended south almost to the Kwanza River and west as far as the Atlantic Ocean. Most of the population lived in the lower part of the Congo River Basin, an environment that included forests, marshes, swamps, lakes, and many tributaries branching off from the Congo.

Cão and his crew would have been sweating in the hot, humid air. Kongo had a tropical climate with two seasons: a dry, cool season from June through September and a rainy, hot season from October to May. The average daily high temperature reached about 85°F, but temperatures tended to be warmer and muggier along the coast where Cão first entered the kingdom. The interior plateau had milder temperatures. A later European sailor described the coastal climate like this:

> *The climate here is so unhealthy for the foreigner that of all those who go there, few fail to sicken, and of those who sicken, few fail to die, and those who survive are obliged to withstand the intense heat of the torrid zone, suffering hunger, thirst, and many other miseries for which there is no relief save patience, of which much is needed . . . to tolerate the discomforts of such a wretched place.*
>
> —Source: a sixteenth century report quoted in Kenny Mann, *Kongo, Ndongo: West Central Africa* (Parsippany, New Jersey: Dillon Press, 1996), 13

Kongo had three main geographical regions which ran parallel to the Atlantic: the coastal lowlands, the central region, and the eastern plateau.

The thin, sandy soil of the coastal lowlands made agriculture difficult. Apart from a type of palm tree from which bark cloth could be produced, little could be grown. Salt made by boiling sea water was manufactured along the coast. Fishing, as well as diving for shells that were used as currency in the kingdom, were also important economic activities. Soyo and Mpinda became important harbors and much trade between the coast and the interior was controlled from these cities. From the coastal lowlands the elevation of the land increased. The coastal plains gave way to rolling savanna, which in turn rose to meet a forested ridge of mountains, the backbone of the central region.

The vegetation of the central region ranged from savanna in the drier southwest to tropical rainforest in the north. Historically, the central region was the most fertile part of the kingdom. In the river valleys a great variety of crops could be grown. These

included grains, root crops, nuts, fruits, vegetables, raffia palms yielding fibers that were woven into luxurious cloth, and various other palms from which bread, oil, wine, and vinegar could be made. The central region was also the most densely populated part of the kingdom. Mbanza Kongo, the capital, was located on a broad plateau in the northern part of the central region. A sixteenth-century European visitor to Kongo remarked on the attributes of the capital's location.

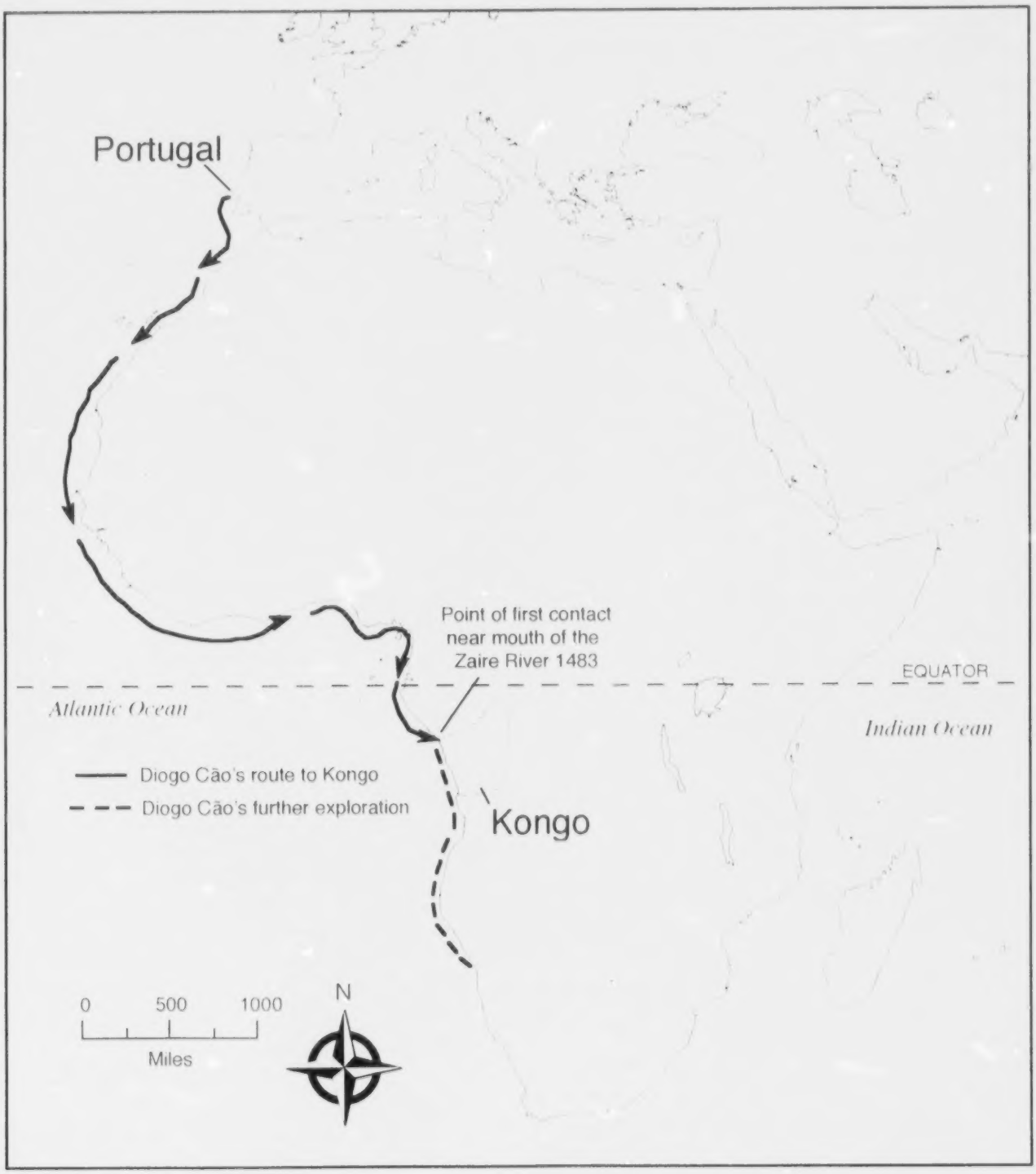
> *For two reasons the earliest lords of the country placed this territory on the said summit; first because it lies in almost the very middle of the kingdom, whence subsidies could be quickly sent to every part; and then, because the natural elevation gives good air, a secure position, and one not to be taken by force. . . . There is no lack of water springs on this high plain . . . to which the people descend . . . and carry the water into the city in vessels of wood and terra cotta, and also in gourds on the shoulders of slaves.*
>
> —Filippo Pigafetta, 1591,quoted in Kenny Mann, *Kongo, Ndongo: West Central Africa* (Parsippany, New Jersey: Dillon Press, 1996), 17.

"Various animals unknown in our regions"
In Filippo Pigafetta and Duarte Lopes, *Description du royaume de Congo et des contrées environnantes*, (1591)

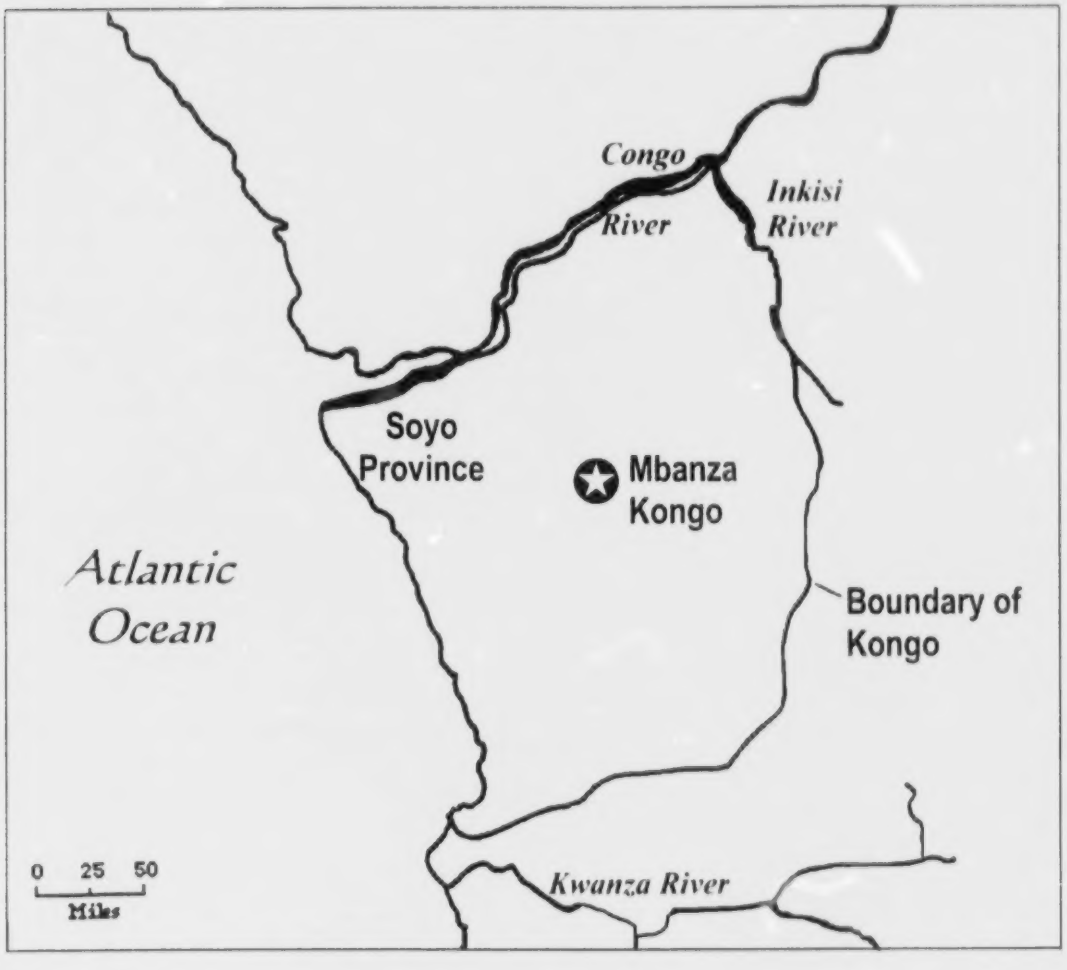
The mountains of the central zone gradually flattened out to form the plateau region in the far eastern part of the kingdom. Wooded river valleys surrounded by flat-topped mountains that formed a natural boundary for the kingdom crisscrossed this dry, desolate area. Few people lived in this region.

In this varied environment, Diogo Cão found a remarkably organized and unified kingdom whose people had for generations learned to make good use of its riches and adapt to its sometimes harsh conditions.

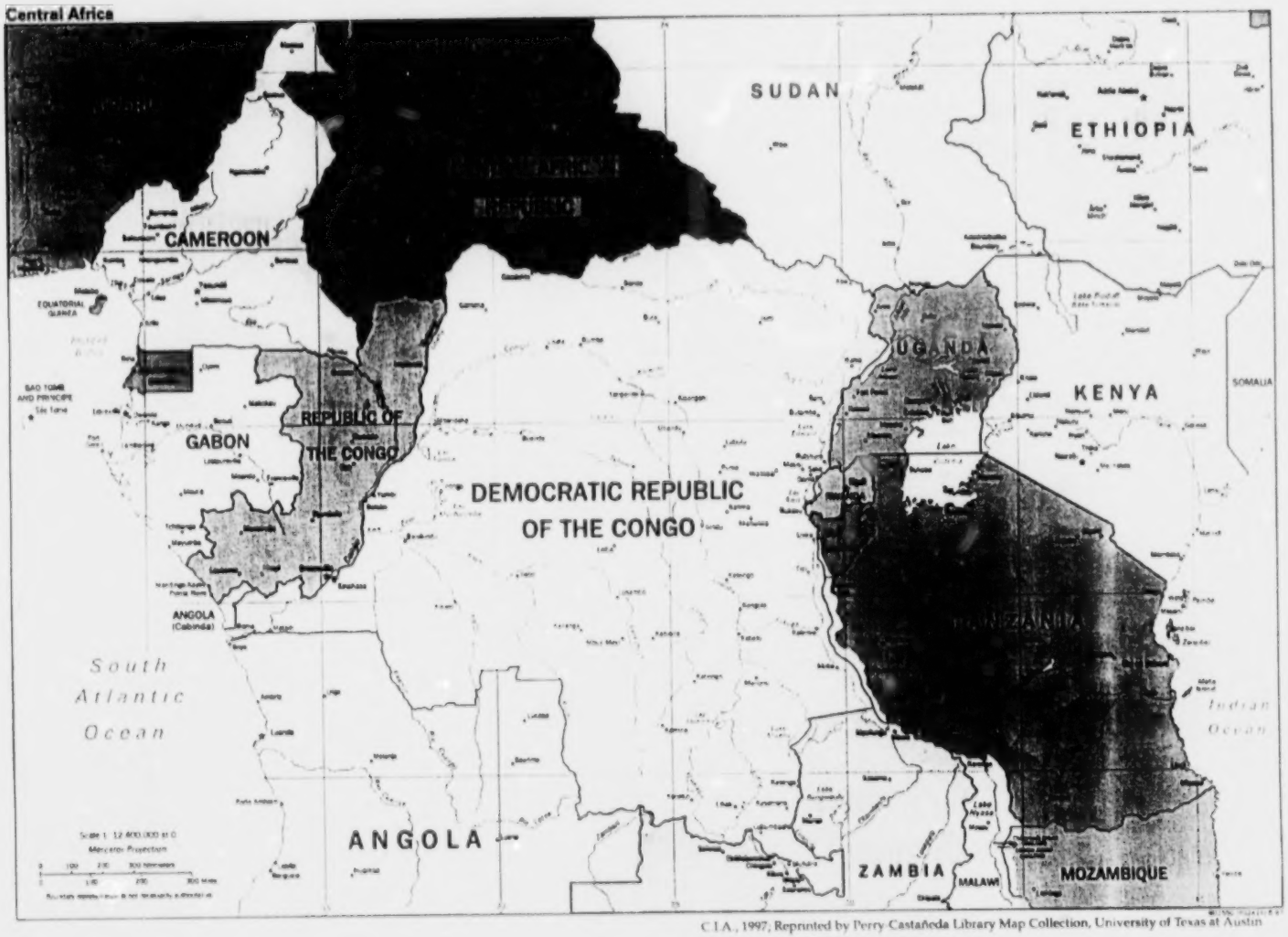
Diogo Cão's Voyage of Exploration



Kingdom of Kongo



Central Africa



C.I.A., 1997, Reprinted by Perry Castañeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas at Austin

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The Return

Historical Fiction

With a mixture of anticipation and dread, Kinu counted the months as they passed, until there was only one left. Soon, the issue would be decided one way or the other. Then, suddenly, the waiting was over. A pair of Soyo runners arrived with the news that a tall ship had been spotted entering the Congo River!

Lukeni, Kinu, and many others headed immediately for Soyo. When they arrived back at their village, they found Kitima and Diogo Cão already there. Kinu was so overjoyed to see his father, he barely noticed the strange Portuguese clothing he wore. Hugging his son, Kitima exclaimed, "I have missed you all very much and I have so much to tell you. Portugal is a remarkable land!" Stories were exchanged long into the night. Both Kitima and Diogo Cão were greatly impressed with Kinu's new-found ability to speak Portuguese.

Concerned about the crew members he had left behind, Diogo Cão was anxious to leave for Mbanza Kongo early the next morning. So within a few days Kinu found himself back in the capital joining his elders in a meeting with the king. Relieved to see that his people had been returned safe and happy, the king nonetheless had many questions for Kinu's father and especially for the Diogo Cão. The days that followed included many long conversations with the king.

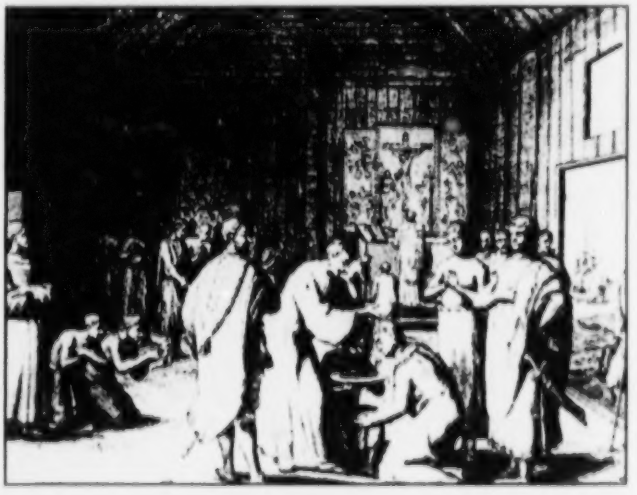
At the first of these meetings, the king began by indignantly demanding that Diogo Cão explain why he had kidnapped four Kongolese men. The king's tone was harsh, and Diogo was clearly on the defensive. Kitima came to his rescue. "My lord king, it is true that I was very upset at first when Diogo Cão set sail as he did and took me against my will with him on his return journey to Portugal. But soon, I realized his good purpose. He knew that unless we could learn to communicate, our two kingdoms would remain forever ignorant of one another. He concluded that there was no easy way for us to solve that problem. So, he took me and the others back to Portugal so that we would have no choice but to learn the language and so that we could see for ourselves the world from which our visitors came. In exchange, he left his people here so that they too could learn of Kongo in much the same way." The king, after considering this explanation for awhile, seemed satisfied. Thereafter, he questioned the Portuguese in a friendly manner.

In response to the king's questioning, Kitima described what he had learned. "In Portugal, they construct buildings and even cities out of stones—stones like the pillar on the beach. Also, the Portuguese record their stories and exchange messages with one another by means of marks they make on thin sheets of white cloth. This is a useful skill and one which I believe the Kongo people should learn."

The daily conversations gave the king much to think about. Finally, after weeks of discussion, he called his court together to announce his conclusions. "I believe that there is much to be learned from our new friends the Portuguese. Portugal has much it can learn from us as well. It is to the benefit of both kingdoms that this friendship continue and grow. Therefore, I have decided to send a delegation of ambassadors to the king of Portugal and will ask that he send a similar delegation to Kongo. Especially, I wish him to send people who can show us their methods of building in stone and others who are well versed in this art of putting words on cloth." Almost everyone present voiced their agreement with the king's words, except Lukeni. "I don't know about this . . . I just don't know . . . ," he kept mumbling to himself. When the crowd had quieted somewhat, the king added another much more surprising announcement.

"Also, I have been persuaded that this "Christian" religion of the Portuguese is true. So I will also ask the king of Portugal to allow our ambassadors to become Christians and to appoint priests to come and teach their religion to the people of Kongo. I myself wish to become a Christian."

Unlike his earlier pronouncements, this one was met with a stony silence. Kinu thought that Lukeni would boil over before he could leave the king's compound. It was of little comfort to Lukeni when he later learned that the king did not intend to require everyone to adopt the Christian religion. "What do we need with another religion?" Lukeni fumed. "What is wrong with the guidance we receive from our ancestors? Surely those who have already lived can best guide those who are now living!" Kinu tried his best to calm his uncle's fears. "I cannot claim to understand it all, uncle, but from what I have heard from my work with the visitors, the Christians would not disagree with you. They too recieve guidance from one who once lived among his people and now lives in the world beyond. It seems to me much the same thing. We need not abandon our ancestors in order to believe as the Christians do. Perhaps you are fretting over nothing."



A baptismal ceremony in a Christian church in the Kongo during the early age of European expansion in Africa.

The Portuguese remained in Kongo for several months endeavoring to learn as much as they could about the country before heading home. They were surprised to learn that the king of Kongo ruled a vast territory covering more than 100,000 square kilometers and containing about 300,000 people. By comparison, Portugal was much smaller in land area, yet had more than twice as many people. In addition, the visitors found the kingdom to be prosperous, well-organized, and well-governed. They were surprised to discover that high-quality steel, a very difficult metal to manufacture,

was a common material in Kongo. In fact, the kingdom seemed to have an abundance of highly skilled craftsmen in many fields. The only important technology that Kongo seemed to lack was that of making firearms. Trade, they concluded, would be profitable for both Portugal and Kongo.

Finally, amid much ceremony, the king's ambassadors boarded Diogo Cão's ship and set sail for Portugal. Not far away stood the solitary stone pillar whose purpose and meaning remained a mystery.

Kinu and his family watched as the ship glided gracefully toward the mouth of the river. Lukeni's mood was somber, and Kinu could tell that he was still uneasy about the changes that might result from this exchange of ambassadors. Kitima must have sensed Lukeni's uncertainty as well. "If you could see the great stone city of Lisbon," Kitima insisted, "it would change your mind. We have nothing to lose in our friendship with the Portuguese and much to gain. Kongo and Portugal are both great kingdoms. But both could become much greater through this exchange of knowledge!"

"Maybe so," replied Lukeni, skeptically. "But what will become of us if one of the kings begins to ask which of the two is greater?"

Diogo Cão

The King of Kongo

When Diogo Cão first dropped anchor at the mouth of the Congo River in 1483, he found a large and thriving kingdom having a large capital city, a royal court, and an efficient system of government. Mzinga Mbemba, the King of Kongo, warmly welcomed the Portuguese and opened his country to them. He converted to Christianity, renamed himself João after the Portuguese king, and exchanged letters and ambassadors with both the pope and the king of Portugal. One letter sent to the Portuguese monarch said this:

To the most serene and glorious Prince, most powerful in the world, dom João, by the Grace of God king of Portugal and its most singular lord.

Most serene and glorious Prince and Lord. After humble recommendation, João, by the grace of God king of Kongo, subject and most friendly, and your brother. We have heard of your virtue and received Rui di Sousa your ambassador, along with his presents with humanity and honor as appropriate, and have calmly heard the things which he revealed on your part. May you have immortal grace and we are all perpetually obliged for your benignity and liberality, which we are transmitting by our words, along with other things we are sending with our ambassador, who will give you this letter with our uncontested faith.

Most high God conserve your most powerful state for a long time and in all cases consign you to eternal life. Written in Kongo the tenth of [October, 1492].

The Kongolese king discovered that he and the Portuguese had a common interest in trade. At his request, Portugal sent a number of carpenters, farmers, missionaries, traders, and other specialists to Kongo. Relations between the two kingdoms became more active.

You, Rodrigo, after kissing the hand of the King of Portugal, refer on my part to these matters and say as follows:

> *That I, and the queen my wife, and my six blacks, nobles and principal people of the court received the water of baptism. . . . Because my kingdom is very populous and full of a multitude of people, it is necessary for Your Majesty to send more friars here, though this means the number of people here will in a short period of time be multiplied, and the divine cult of our Religion augmented. . . .*

That the farmers which His Majesty sent here for our country, which as we say is fertile in grain, oil, and other things, are greatly loved and will be treated humanely.

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Lesson Three
A Distant Partner

A. Objectives

- To list and describe changes that took place in Kongo after formal relations were established with the Portuguese.
- To describe early conflicts within Kongo that were the direct or indirect result of Portuguese presence and influence.
- To describe problems experienced by Kongo that resulted from Portuguese activities.

B. Lesson Activities (Completion Time: 1 day)

1. Introductory Class Discussion

Review with students the predictions they made at the end of **Lesson Two**. Explain that this lesson continues the story twenty-nine years later.

2. Historical Fiction: "A Distant Partner"

Distribute copies of **Student Handout 7**, "A Distant Partner." Reading may be done individually or orally. During or after the reading, instruct students to make a list of the changes that took place in Kongo over the twenty-nine years that elapsed since "The Return."

3. Class Discussion

Have students share and discuss their lists. Record their ideas on the board or overhead. Once the compiled list is complete, have students vote on whether each change is positive, negative, or neutral. Mark each change with an appropriate symbol. Discuss the results.

4. Questions

As an assignment or in a discussion, have students answer these questions:

- Kinu and Lukeni debate the wisdom of Kongo's relationship with Portugal. With whom do you most agree? Explain your answer.
- Has your opinion changed since a similar question was posed in **Lesson Two**? If so, how and why?

5. "The Slave Trade"

Hand out the copies of the primary source document, "The Slave Trade" (**Document D**). Explain to students that Afonso wrote many letters to the king of Portugal and that this one was written about ten years after the one described in "A Distant Partner." Have students use the document to add to their list of changes.

6. Questions

As an assignment or in a discussion, have students deal with questions such as:

a. What was the role of religion in bringing change to Kongo?

b. Domestic conflicts, including a civil war, took place in Kongo during the period depicted in "A Distant Partner." Were the Portuguese directly responsible for these conflicts? Support your answer with evidence from the story.

c. Did the primary source (**Document D**) affect your opinion regarding the debate between Kinu and Lukeni? If so, how and why?

A Distant Partner
Historical Fiction

With a deep sigh, Kinu tossed his pen on the table and rubbed his tired eyes. Most of his day had been spent transcribing court documents for the king. Now the light was failing and his hand ached. With a yawn, he stood and stretched, then crossed to the tall palace window. The setting sun cast a pleasant orange glow on the stone buildings and streets of the capital, Mbanza Kongo. How very different it all looks, he mused, remembering back to the Kongo of his childhood. He smiled as he recalled how he had dragged poor Uncle Lukeni to the beach the day they had met the Portuguese. No one then, not even Kitima, his visionary father, could have imagined the changes that would come to Kongo as a result of that first contact with the Portuguese.

Now at thirty-eight, Kinu held the honored position of personal secretary to the king. Glancing over his shoulder at the pile of papers on the table, he remembered the happy days he spent in the new school where he quickly mastered the art of reading and writing.

As the sun finally slipped below the horizon and the warm orange glow faded to pale twilight, the bells of Vera Cruz chimed the evening call to worship. That too, Kinu thought, is another great change that has come to Kongo. One of the very first things the Portuguese did upon their return to Kongo was to baptize the old king and his family into the Christian religion. Many among the people of Kongo followed the king's example and were also baptized. Kinu remembered how the wise old king, much to Uncle Lukeni's relief, did not insist on everyone becoming Christian. Even the king's son, Mpanzu, had changed his mind after being baptized and returned to the old ways. It had seemed then that Christianity and the old beliefs would be able to exist side by side without conflict. But, as Uncle Lukeni was fond of reminding him, things are not always what they seem.

When the old king died, a civil war broke out between his sons Mpanzu and Afonso. Afonso, a Christian, defeated his non-Christian brother in spite of being greatly outnumbered. He gave credit for his remarkable victory to the Christian God and promptly ordered the construction of the church whose bells now echoed throughout the city. Kinu remembered the great public ceremony in which Afonso burned a large pile of traditional idols and in their place handed out crosses—symbols of Christianity. There were many more converts to the new religion as a result.

A Roman Catholic church in Luanda, built by the Portuguese
Library of Congress

Again, his thoughts drifted to Uncle Lukeni. Stubbornly skeptical of the Portuguese and their religion, Lukeni had supported Mpanzu in the brief civil war. He survived and was pardoned by the king and now lived, opinions unchanged, in self-

imposed exile back in Soyo. A pang of guilt invaded Kinu's thoughts. He hadn't seen his uncle in over a year.

It was nearly dark now and Kinu turned from the window. He could barely make out the table with its pile of documents. Several candles sat nearby. He thought of lighting one, but quickly discarded the idea. With a sigh, he returned to the table, organized the papers as best he could, and capped the inkwell. There would be no more work this evening—his mind was too full of thoughts from the past. Instead he shuffled over to his bed in the corner. Soon he was dreaming of the beach in Soyo.

***

"Good morning, my man of letters!" greeted King Afonso cheerfully as Kinu was led into his spacious chamber. "Did you finish those transcripts?"

The king, a tall, imposing figure, was standing by the window gazing out at his new city much as Kinu had done the night before.

"Yes, my lord," Kinu answered stifling a yawn.

"Good. We have other work to accomplish this morning."

Afonso's intelligence and energetic personality made him a good king but also a demanding task-master, Kinu reflected ruefully.

Afonso seemed not to notice Kinu's heavy eyes and slow step. "We must compose another letter to my friend the King of Portugal. He must know that some of his people—mostly those who are newly arrived—are not as well-mannered as those who came earlier. They are ignorant of our customs and laws and seem determined to remain so. More and more, my officers report that when they confront a Portuguese who has broken a law, he expresses surprise and even indignation that he should have to follow the rules of our kingdom. Such an attitude is unacceptable and must be corrected. Perhaps the King of Portugal can do a better job of instructing his people before they come here."

"The King of Portugal is a good man, and I'm sure he will do his best to remedy the situation, my lord. But Lisbon is far from Kongo. There is little he can do to enforce his commands or control his people from such a distance."

"Very good, Kinu! I too have reached that same conclusion. That is why, after we finish our letter to the King, we will begin work on some new laws that specifically address the conduct of our Portuguese guests. We must spell out our expectations of them in the clearest language possible. That will be your job."

Kinu could see a mountain of work rising before him. Thoughts from the night before returned. Clearing his throat, Kinu ventured, "My lord king, might I ask you a favor?"

Afonso's brows shot up in surprise, but then he smiled broadly. "You want some time to visit your family," he stated confidently. Afonso always tried to read people's minds, Kinu observed uncomfortably.

"Yes, my lord. If you can spare me for a few days."

"Are you planning to visit that old rebel uncle of yours?"

"That is what I had in mind to do. I haven't seen him in a very long time."

The king nodded approvingly. "Very good. You should not neglect your family

duties any more than you should neglect your duties here. As soon as we have finished composing the letter and drafting our new laws, you may take some time for your family."

"Thank you, my lord."

"And tell your uncle that I bear him no ill-feelings for his earlier stand against me. Change comes hard for some people. I understand that."

"Yes, my lord. I will give him your message. I'm sure he will be happy to know that you do not hold a grudge against him." But don't expect him to have changed his opinions, Kinu added to himself.

At dawn on the first morning of Kinu's visit to Soyo, Lukeni woke him and led him by the arm toward the shore. For a long while, they walked in silence and Kinu wondered what Lukeni had in mind. Finally, they came to the wide, sandy beach where Lukeni stopped to gaze out at the seemingly endless sea. "Everything is changing, Kinu, and it seems there is no going back. Until the Portuguese came, we lived a way of life that was given to us by our ancestors over countless generations. Now our way of life is being cast aside in favor of ideas from an alien land." With a sweeping gesture he indicated the vast expanse of water before them. "Look out there, Kinu. Try as we might, we can't even see Portugal! Living near the sea as I do, one is often reminded of the almost unimaginable distance that separates our two worlds." Again taking Kinu by the arm, Lukeni led him along the water's edge. Raising his voice above the crashing surf, Lukeni continued, "Afonso has brought great change to Kongo and I forsee danger ahead. One change inevitably leads to others, changes that cannot be anticipated. The kingdom of Kongo is like a finely woven garment. Pull the wrong thread from a robe, and the entire garment may quickly unravel."

Kinu studied his aging uncle. Over the years, Lukeni's hair had turned completely gray and his once long stride was now slower and more deliberate. But his eyes still shone with great passion and intelligence. Lukeni was a man who believed strongly in his convictions—there was no turning him away from his beliefs.

"You are wise, Uncle." Kinu finally answered. "I do not fault you for believing as you do. But, at the same time, you must not fault me for disagreeing. I believe that our relationship with Portugal means progress for both kingdoms. The passage of time is something we cannot stop. Change comes to us whether we seek it or not. Afonso is leading us into the future. Mpanzu would have tried to drag us back into the past."

Lukeni shook his head sadly, but wrapped an arm around his nephew's shoulder as they resumed their walk along the beach. They soon found themselves at the towering padrão. Lukeni prodded the stone pillar with his walking stick. "This thing bothers me," he sighed. "I realize that I have no proof of any wrongdoing by the Portuguese. All I have is a feeling—a bad feeling about our relationship with a kingdom so different and far away from our own. This great rock is like a sore toe. It irritates me and won't go away."

"Change is never easy, Uncle. But you will see. Afonso is transforming Kongo into a great and wealthy kingdom. There can be no harm in that."

Lukeni smiled. "Kinu, you are like your father—a dreamer. I suppose that is a good thing. The world needs dreamers or nothing great would ever happen. You have a vision of the world as it should be, and you work hard to make that dream a

reality. I want you to know that I am very proud of you." As they turned from the beach, he added, "We may not agree on many things, Nephew, but I hope you understand that I wish you success in all you do. But, please remember these words of advice from an old man." Lukeni paused and leaned on his walking stick, his eyes seeming to focus on something far away. "The journey between knowing how a thing should be and making it so is a long and difficult one. This is because you cannot make the journey alone. Many others, indeed the entire kingdom, must travel that road with you. People are not perfect, Kinu, whether they be Kongolese or Portuguese. Some are good and honest, others are not. It can be difficult, especially for a dreamer, to tell the difference."

Kinu would always remember his uncle's words for, as it turned out, they were among the last Lukeni spoke to his nephew. Two weeks later, the old man died peacefully in his sleep. Back in Soyo again, grieving for his uncle, Kinu walked alone along the beach. Tears blurred his vision and he walked past the stone pillar without seeing it. Now virtually forgotten, the padrão still stood, a tall, silent marker without a message.

An example of a pillar erected by Diogo Cão
Lisbon Geographic Society

The Slave Trade

In 1526, Afonso wrote a letter to his "brother monarch," the king of Portugal, complaining about the slave trade:

In our Kingdoms there is another great inconvenience which is of little service to God, and this is that many of our people, keenly desirous as they are of the wares and things of your Kingdom, which are brought here by your people, and in order to satisfy their voracious appetite, seize many of our people, freed and exempt men; and very often it happens that they kidnap even noblemen and the sons of noblemen, and our relatives, and take them to be sold to the white men who are in our Kingdoms. . . .

And as soon as they are taken by the white men they are immediately ironed and branded with fire, and when they are carried to be embarked, if they are caught by our guards' men the whites allege that they have bought them but they cannot say from whom . . . and so great, Sir, is the corruption . . . that our country is being completely depopulated . . . That is why we beg Your Highness to help and assist us in this matter . . . because it is our will that in these Kingdoms there should not be any trade of slaves nor outlet for them.

—Source: John Reader, *Africa: a Biography of the Continent* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998).

"Captives in African village being sent into slavery"
The slave trade continued for more than 300 years after King Afonso's letter as evidenced by this woodengraving depicting a scene in Congo described by 19th-century explorer Henry M. Stanley.

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Lesson Four
The Inquest

A. Objective

- To describe a political conflict within Kongo and explain the role of the Portuguese and the Roman Catholic Church in this conflict.

B. Lesson Activities (Completion Time: 2 days)

1. Introduction

Explain to students that after the death of Afonso, the people of Kongo continued to prosper in their dealings with the Portuguese, yet internal conflicts continued to erupt. This lesson investigates one such conflict.

2. Historical Fiction: "Sanctuary"

Distribute copies of the story "Sanctuary," (**Student Handout 8**). Have students read the story individually or aloud.

3. "The Inquest of 1550"

Distribute copies of the primary source document, "The Inquest of 1550" (**Document F**). Read and briefly discuss the introductory paragraph. Have students read the document, which is an introduction to the inquest transcript. Instruct students to notice how it is written and to construct a one or two sentence summary of its meaning. Discuss the results. Students will likely say that the language used is very formal and legalistic, which makes sense because this was a legal court document. The reading is difficult to follow, because it is comprised mainly of run-on sentences. The second paragraph, for example, is basically one sentence. In simple terms, the document states that King Diogo ordered an investigation into the treason of dom Pedro, son of the deceased King Afonso, so that the King of Portugal could be informed of this treason. It further states that the investigation was completed and testimony taken. What follows is the transcript of that testimony.

4. Simulation Activity: The Inquest

- Select seven students to portray the witnesses. Give each a copy of the testimony he or she will be reading (**Student Handouts 9.1–9.7**). Note that the testimony is a simplified paraphrasing of the actual testimony given in the inquest. Despite the simplification, the reading level is rather difficult. It helps, therefore, to have stronger readers portray the witnesses when possible. It is also helpful to give the witnesses a copy of their testimony a day or so in advance so that they can rehearse it.

- Hand out copies of the activity sheet, "The Inquest" (**Student Handout 10**). Explain to students that they will be playing a role similar to that of a jury or panel of judges. Explain the difference between this inquest and a trial. The point is not to convict or acquit a defendant. The function of an inquest is like that of a modern grand jury. The goal of the Inquest of 1550 was to determine whether or not there was enough evidence to persuade the Pope in Rome that Pedro was guilty of committing treason while under the protection of the Church and whether he should be turned over to King Diogo. Explain to students that the purpose of the worksheet is to make it easier for them to take notes on the testimony. Many of the names in the testimony may be unfamiliar. Therefore the worksheet lists the names of witnesses as well as the names of people they mention.

- Call the witnesses one by one to give their testimony. Have students take notes.

- Divide the students into small groups. Instruct each group to compare and discuss its notes.

- Have each group decide whether there is enough evidence to convince the Pope of Pedro's treason. Also, have each group review its notes to come up with a definition of the term kanda, an important word often used in the testimony.

- Hold a brief full-class discussion in which the groups share their conclusions.

5. Writing Activity: A Letter to the Pope

Assign students to compose a letter based on this prompt: "Imagine that you are dom Diogo, the king of Kongo. Compose a letter to the Pope in which you use evidence presented in the inquest to persuade him to order that dom Pedro handed be over to you."

6. Follow-up Discussion

Debrief the simulation by discussing its significance. Ask students to identify the role of the Portuguese and the Church in this political conflict. Students should be able to articulate the fact that the Portuguese and the Church were becoming involved in Kongo politics, sometimes without meaning to. In this case, Diogo was turning to the authority of the King of Portugal and the Pope in Rome to help him resolve a dispute in which his claim to the throne of Kongo hung in the balance. Here is an example of a situation in which outsiders were given the power to make decisions that could have profound consequences for Kongo. Students will likely ask what actually happened in this case. Unfortunately, the historical record is rather vague on this subject. We know that a letter was sent to

the King of Portugal along with the transcript of the inquest asking him to convince the Pope to revoke Pedro's sanctuary. There exists no evidence that the Portuguese king did anything about this request. But we do know that Diogo remained king of Kongo, so the threat posed by Pedro was somehow diminished or eliminated. There is no record of what became of Pedro.

The Portuguese observe the baptism of the Sonho governor

In Filippo Pigafetta and Duarte Lopes, Description du royaume de Congo et des contrées environnantes, (1591)

Sanctuary
Historical Fiction

Only the darkness of the alleyway hid dom Pedro and his loyal friend dom Bastia from view as a group of soldiers hurried down the street just yards from their hiding place. The sounds of battle were fading, an indication that their cause was almost certainly lost, their forces scattered and defeated.

"We must move," urged dom Bastia. "Dom Diogo will have his men comb the city—hunt us down. We will surely be discovered here!"

Dom Pedro nodded agreement and nervously wiped the sweat from his brow. He took a quick glance around the corner and then ducked back into the shadows. "The city is crawling with dom Diogo's soldiers. Where can we go?"

Just then, church bells rang out, filling the air with their call to worship—a sharp contrast to the battle raging nearby. Both men realized at once that their running battle with dom Diogo's men had brought them within a short run toVera Cruz, Mbanza Kongo's oldest and largest church.

"That's it!" exclaimed dom Bastia. "If we can make it to the church we can take refuge there." Dom Pedro eyed his friend doubtfully. He didn't think much of their chances. But even so, he could not think of a better plan. "Right," he said with as much confidence as he could muster. "Let's go!" They dashed from the shaded ally into the bright, hot sunshine that baked the wide avenues of the city.

Immediately they were spotted. "There they are! Get them!" bellowed a voice from close behind. But the church was just down the street. Their goal in sight, neither man looked back as they raced headlong toward the gates of the palisade that surrounded Vera Cruz. After what seemed like an eternity, they were through the palisade gates and sprinting toward the tall arch of the church doorway. A volley of arrows slapped and spintered on the stonework nearby just as the fugitives plunged into the cool darkness of the lofty church. The rapid drumming of their footsteps echoed loudly off the walls of the massive building as they blindly ran down the center of the vast open hall. Stumbling to a halt, the pair found themselves at the front of the church near the raised altar, from which an elderly Portuguese priest glared at them with contempt. "This is a house of God!" he intoned. "Take your barbaric fighting elsewhere!"

Just then, the pursuing company of soldiers, about twenty in all, came bursting into the church intent on capturing their prey. Dom Bastia placed himself between the soldiers and his master, dom Pedro. "Stop!" he cried. Turning to the priest he shouted, "Father! We claim the right of sanctuary. Protect us!" The soldiers hesitated, a look of bewilderment on their faces.

The priest growled something under his breath, then stared at dom Bastia for a long moment with narrowed eyes and clenched jaws. Raising his gaze to the confused soldiers, he commanded, "It is true. You cannot arrest a man in God's Church, no matter what his crime. In this house of God, man's law does not apply. These men and their crimes are now the Church's concern—not the king's. You have no jurisdiction here. To take these men into custody now would be to commit a crime against God in his own house!" Tense moments passed as the soldiers looked at one another, uncer-

tainly. "Did you not hear me?" bellowed the priest. "Go away!" Sheepishly, the soldiers filed out of the Church, leaving dom Pedro and dom Bastia alone with their reluctant benefactor.

"Thank you, Father!" beamed dom Bastia as the last of the soldiers passed through the doorway.

"You are not welcome, young man. I have no doubt that you and your friend will prove more trouble than you are worth."

"But Father," dom Bastia protested. "My companion here is dom Pedro, the son of our late King Afonso! You have saved the rightful king of Kongo from certain death!"

Clearly unimpressed, the old priest looked dom Pedro up and down. "Humph. Within these walls titles carry no meaning — it doesn't matter who you are. The only authority here is the authority of the Church. Ultimately that authority rests with God, and his servant on earth, the Pope in Rome." The priest then fixed dom Pedro with an icy stare. "Whatever your ambitions for regaining the throne of Kongo, you are in no position to be giving commands here. If you want the protection you asked for, both of you had better behave yourselves while you are within these walls! Now get down on your knees and thank God that you are still alive."

With that, the old priest turned back to the altar and began to chant prayers, beginning the daily ritual of the mass. Confused, dom Bastia looked around. The cavernous church was empty except for the three of them. All the fighting in the streets had apparently kept worshipers from leaving the safety of their houses. As the two fugitives knelt down on the hard, cool, stone floor, dom Bastia marvelled at the stubborn, old priest. His manner was gruff, but he was absolutely devoted to his Church and its rules. In spite of his personal feelings, he had invoked the right of sanctuary and saved their lives. In the same way, he would have performed the mass in an empty church, had he not been interrupted. Now the solemn ceremony was taking place before a congregation of two, and somehow dom Bastia felt honored.

* * *

Dom Diogo's angry, booming voice could be heard throughout the palace. "Sanctuary! What do you mean "sanctuary?" I told you to capture that traitor and bring him to me. What was it about those orders you did not understand?"

Beads of sweat ran down the soldier's face as he stood nervously before his king. "My lord king, dom Pedro and his companion ran into the church. The priest there would not let us take the traitor into custody. He said it was a rule of the Church . . . that we would be condemned by God if we tried to take him from there. I am sorry, my king. I did not know what else to do. . . ."

Dom Diogo, a tall man with large chiseled features, rose from his throne and stood looming over the frightened soldier. "Since when do you take your orders from a priest?" he roared.

Another, much calmer, voice answered. "My lord, is it not true that in confession, when we tell our sins to a priest, that he orders us to do penance and that we must do it?"

Dom Diogo considered the words of his advisor for a moment. "Yes . . . yes, I suppose that is true."

"What this soldier has told you is also true. The right of sanctuary is sacred. Inside that building, the only king is God. Nothing short of an order from the Pope himself could pry those men from the protection of the Church. No matter how terrible his crime, dom Pedro is safe from arrest—so long as he remains within the walls of the church."

Clearly agitated, dom Diogo began pacing rapidly back and forth across the large stone room. "But I am the king!" he cried. "I was elected by the independent nobles according to the accepted traditions of our people. I am the grandson of King Afonso, the greatest king of Kongo who ever lived. I am the rightful king of Kongo. Dom Pedro has nothing to support his claim beyond the fact that he is a son of Afonso. With the support of his kanda, he has tried to take control of Kongo from its true king. His crime, therefore, is treason, and treason is punishable by death! I don't care what the priests say, I don't see any reason why I should not have my men go into that church and seize dom Pedro. Why should the Church want to protect someone who is obviously a criminal?"

"My lord king," answered the advisor. "It is not that simple. If you violate dom Pedro's right of sanctuary, you will lose the support of the Church. You know as well as I that you cannot remain king without that support. The people will not follow you if the Church tells them not to. They will obey God before they will obey you and . . ."

Dom Diogo abruptly halted in front of the advisor, reached out with his massive hands, and grabbed him by his shirt. Pulling the man close, the king hissed, "Dom Pedro is a traitor and I mean to have his head. It is your job to give it to me—or perhaps I will have yours instead!" With that, he released his hold, turned and stalked back to his throne.

The advisor calmly smoothed his rumpled shirt, and in an even voice said, "My lord, although we cannot simply go in and get the traitor, I do know a way we can have his head."

As he sat down, dom Diogo glared at the advisor suspiciously. "Oh? And how is that?"

"It will require patience, my lord, for my plan will probably require quite some time. But in the end we will surely have him."

"Go on! Let's hear this magical plan of yours."

"Well, my lord, as you know, dom Pedro is an ambitious man. He is determined to be king."

"Yes . . . so?"

"So, I don't think he will be content to sit in a Church for the rest of his life and pray."

"True. He will not. He will feel like a trapped lion."

"So, I think he will make another attempt to take over the kingdom. And to do that he will need to communicate with members of his kanda and bring others to his side as well. All we need to do is watch him carefully. If he commits treason while he is in the church, then it is he who will be breaking the sacred right of sanctuary. If we can prove such treason to the Pope in Rome, we may be able to persuade the Pope to order that dom Pedro be handed over to us."

The king's eyes grew wide and he rose slowly from his throne. "But this is a gamble is it not? If we allow him time to try again, might he not succeed this time? Would it be wise for us to give him time to build a powerful *kanda*?"

"I don't see that we have any choice. But you are right, my lord. It is something of a gamble. We must give him enough time to provide us with adequate evidence, but not so much that he can put a plot into action. You must put your best investigators to work on this. They must carefully watch and keep a record of everyone who comes and goes from that church. In order to have proof of a conspiracy, our investigators must find a way to learn the details of any conversations those people have with dom Pedro. It will not be easy."

The king rubbed his chin thoughtfully. "No, it will not be easy. But it must be accomplished. Send for my investigators immediately." As the advisor turned to carry out the order, dom Diogo added, "I will try to be patient and give you as much time as you need. But if you fail . . ."

"I will not fail, my lord king. I intend to keep my head."

The Inquest of 1550

Following the death of King Afonso, the first of many struggles over control of Kongo began with a rebellion by Pedro, Afonso's son, against King Diogo, Afonso's grandson and successor. Pedro's forces were defeated, but Pedro took refuge in a church, preventing Diogo from arresting him. Frustrated, Diogo set out to prove a case of treason against Pedro that would compel Church officials to surrender him. Records of the resulting inquest have survived.

Copy of a judicial inquiry which His Royal Lord [King Diogo] ordered made by the magistrate . . . concerning the treason which dom Pedro . . . mounted against him.

Let it be known that this public instrument, given by order and authority of Justice by the most powerful and Christian King dom Diogo, by God through his Holy Grace, seeing that in the year of our Lord Jesus Christ one thousand five hundred and fifty two, on the tenth day of January of this year, in the city of Kongo in the palaces of his Royal Lord after the same lord had ordered the magistrate . . . in the presence of me, the clerk, ordered him to complete the present instrument, as a copy of the inquest and inquiry which was undertaken concerning the treason dom Pedro . . . raised against him, and as his Royal Lord wishes that in the Kingdom of Portugal, his Brother the king be informed of the truth, ordered the said magistrate to complete the present instrument with a copy of the inquest, which I . . . Bellchoir Dias, clerk and notary public of the Kingdom and Lordship of Kongo copy. And here it follows.

Act and inquiry which his Royal Lord ordered the magistrate . . . to make, concerning the treason raised against him by dom Pedro . . .

In the year of Our Lord Jesus Christ one thousand five hundred and fifty, on the tenth day of the month of April of this year, in this city of Kongo in the palaces of his Royal Lord, after his Royal Lord ordered the magistrate . . . in my presence, the clerk below nominated, to question certain witnesses and inquire into how dom Pedro . . . had mounted treason against his Royal Lord so that he . . . [could conquer] the kingdom and take possession of it himself . . . whereupon the said magistrate ordered me, the clerk, to make this act [an investigation] and to question all the witnesses which His Royal Lord ordered to appear, until everything be completed. I, Bellchoir Dias, notary public and clerk of the Judiciary and orphans in this Kingdom and Lordship of Kongo, write this for the king our Lord. . . .

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Inquest of 1550
Testimony

Witness #1: João Eannes, Chapel Boy

I am a Chapel Boy in the church, so I am there all the time and see everyone who comes and goes. I have noticed that dom Pedro has had many visitors since he first took refuge in the church. A man named dom Bastia, who works for dom Pedro, brought many of these people to the church to meet with dom Pedro. Most of the visitors are people I do not know, and I cannot tell you what they said, but I do know that dom Pedro was very careful to hold these meetings in private, behind closed doors. For example, one day I saw someone I recognized—a government official named Pedro Alvares—come into the Church to meet with dom Pedro. They spoke only in whispers and soon they went into the vestry and closed the doors so they could meet in private. I did not go in, so I did not hear what was said, but they were in there for quite some time. When they came out, both men were smiling and seemed to be in agreement with one another.

Inquest of 1550
Testimony

Witness #2: Dom Afonso, a government official

[Afonso is very nervous, afraid that he might be accused of treason along with dom Pedro.]

I am dom Afonso, a loyal government official of his Royal Lord, dom Diogo. While I was in church one day, dom Pedro called to me and said he wished to speak with me in private. Not knowing what he wanted, I went with him into the vestry. Surely you understand, it would be impolite to do anything else. Dom Pedro closed the doors behind us and then asked me to swear on the Bible that I would tell no one about this conversation. Since I did not know what this conversation was to be about, I refused, naturally. But dom Pedro insisted. He said that what he had to say was very important and must be kept secret. Please understand that he was very insistent. So, finally I agreed and swore to say nothing. Dom Pedro then told me that he intended to leave the church and take over the kingdom. He urged me to take his side and help him. I asked him, 'Why should I do such a thing?' He replied that if I did not join him and remained loyal to the king, I would lose everything—perhaps even my life. He pointed out that I was appointed to my office in the government before dom Diogo became king, and that because of this, the king was likely to replace me with someone from his own kanda. I said that I did not believe that the king would do such a thing, but dom Pedro said that he had heard that my position and income had already been promised to someone else. I argued that I had heard no such thing and that the king had assured me that I would continue in office as before. Dom Pedro replied that I was wrong. He pointed out that the king had promised me the rent income from the province of Nsundi, but instead gave it to someone else. If the king would break one promise, why not another? Further, dom Pedro said that if I did not join him, I would end up on the losing side, because he had many supporters—more supporters than the king. I did not know what to do or who to believe. For the time being, I told dom Pedro that I would make no promises and left it at that. The next day, dom Bastia came to me and said that my brother had taken dom Pedro's side and was going to Nsundi to raise an army. He said that I must decide soon which side I was on, because it would not be long before dom Pedro left the church to challenge the king. Still, I could not decide. I wanted to remain loyal to the king, but dom Pedro's words haunted me. Finally, I decided to confess what I knew to a priest and seek God's guidance. The priest listened to my story, then ordered me to tell everything I knew to the king because it was a case of treason. So here I am and everything I have said is true. Understand that I did nothing wrong. I talked to dom Pedro, but in the end I did nothing he asked of me.

Inquest of 1550
Testimony

Witness #3: Venda, another Chapel Boy of Vera Cruz

I am Venda, a chapel boy at the Church where dom Pedro has taken sanctuary. One day I saw dom Francisco come to the Church and meet with dom Pedro in secret. They came together into the vestry and closed the doors behind them. I was in the closet folding and putting away the priest's vestments. I wasn't hiding, but they either didn't notice me or didn't care that I was there. I continued working, but I clearly heard all that was said.

dom Francisco told dom Pedro that, in his opinion, it was not necessary for him to leave the Church to win control of the kingdom. He said he believed that dom Pedro had more local supporters right here in the capital than the king had, so it would not be too difficult to raise an army right under the king's nose. Dom Pedro thought about this for a few minutes and then said that he was not so sure. The king, he said, had three powerful supporters nearby: Lord Lumbu, Lord Vunda, and Lord Kondongo. Dom Francisco laughed and replied that he had taken care of all three already and that they would be no threat at all. When dom Pedro asked him about this, dom Francisco explained that he had promised Lord Banpa, a friend of his, the income from Lord Lubo's lands if he would kill Lord Lubo. As for Lord Vunda and Lord Comdomguo, dom Francisco said that he had arranged for their murders also—by their own people. He did not say what he had promised in return. Dom Pedro seemed very pleased by this news. And that is all that I know.

Inquest of 1550
Testimony

Witness #4: Dom Bastiam, a noble

[not to be confused with dom Bastia]

I am dom Bastiam, a squire loyal to his highness, the king. I was present at a meeting between dom Pedro and Lord Mpemba. Dom Pedro said that he planned to leave the sanctuary of the church and take over the kingdom. He asked for Lord Mpemba's advice and support in this endeavor. Lord Mpemba seemed unsure how he should reply. He explained that he was under investigation by the royal courts and that he had been temporarily removed from his government office while this investigation took place. He therefore had no army to offer in support. Besides, Lord Mpemba said, he saw no reason to go against the king. Dom Pedro became angry and called Lord Mpemba a fool. He argued that the fact he was being investigated was clearly reason enough to turn against the king. Surely, dom Pedro said, the investigation was meant to remove Lord Mpemba from his office and lands so that his office and income could be given to someone else within the King's kanda. But Lord Mpemba was not so sure of this, and did not commit himself one way or the other.

Inquest of 1550
Testimony

Witness #5: Dom Antonio, a government official

My name is dom Antonio. I am a loyal official in the king's service. I was asked by dom Bastia to meet with dom Pedro in the Church where he has taken sanctuary. When I asked dom Bastia why dom Pedro wished to see me, he only said that it was very important and that I would find out when I got there. I could see no good reason to refuse, so I went to the Church. Dom Pedro greeted me warmly and escorted me into the vestry, closing the doors behind us. I asked him why he had summoned me, and he replied that he thought highly of my abilities and wished to see me continue in office. He said that soon he would be leaving the Church to take over the kingdom and that I should side with him so that he would be able to leave me in office when he became king. Immediately, I protested this suggestion of treason against the king. I told dom Pedro bluntly that I had no intention of taking his side and that he should be beheaded for even suggesting such a thing. But dom Pedro calmly replied that I should understand that I really had no choice since he had more supporters than the king. He said that the only way for me to keep my position and income was to take his side. When I said that I did not believe him, he started naming all the important people who had pledged to support him. Among those he named were dom Afonso, dom Francisco, and Lord Mpemba. Naturally, I was alarmed by this news, since these are all powerful men. But still, I told him that I wouldn't have anything to do with his plans and would remain loyal to the king no matter what. I did not wait for his reply and left the Church immediately.

Inquest of 1550
Testimony

Witness #6: dom João de Melo, the King's porter

I am dom João de Melo, porter of his Royal Lord the King. I was ordered by the king to visit dom Pedro in the church where he has taken refuge and ask him about his plans. Dom Bastia greeted me and explained that dom Pedro was saying prayers in the chapel, so I must wait for him to finish. A short while later, dom Pedro came out from the chapel, greeted me politely, and asked what I wanted. I told him that the King wished to know what he planned to do, so that some peaceful settlement to this dispute might be found. Dom Pedro asked me to thank the King for his interest, but that he really had no plans to leave the sanctuary of the Church. He said further that he had been visited by many friends who had urged him to leave the Church but that he had refused them all. According to dom Pedro, his brother dom Rodrigo, who lives outside the kingdom on the island of Sao Tome, had sent a letter also urging dom Pedro to leave the Church and take up arms against the king. But, dom Pedro said, he had sent a reply to his brother saying that he wished only to remain in the peaceful sanctuary of the Holy Church and that nothing would ever change his mind. I carried this message to my Lord the King.

Inquest of 1550
Testimony

Witness #7: dom Mwene Wembo, an officer of the King

I am dom Mwene Wembo, chief investigator for the King in this case. Two days before the King's porter met with dom Pedro in the Church, my men intercepted this letter (holds up the letter for all to see) from dom Pedro addressed to dom Rodrigo in Sao Tome. I will now read the letter.

My Dear Brother,

Greetings. Many things have happened since you left. The traitor who now wears the crown and calls himself King has been taking revenge on all the members of our kanda. I think he will not rest until he has killed us all. He has even declared that if he should die, no one belonging to our kanda can be considered for the crown, or even become an official in the new government. Instead, he has left all for his son and has declared that anyone who fails to follow his son will be banished forever. I tell you, he means to destroy our kanda altogether, and I fear he may succeed if we do not stop him. Our only hope rests with you. Since you live outside the kingdom, you are the only one free to take action. I am confident that you will do your duty and save our kanda from extinction.

Here is what you must do. You must send a letter to the King of Portugal. In that letter you must persuade the king to ask the Pope in Rome to issue an order declaring dom Diogo a traitor and naming me as the rightful king of Kongo. I tell you, this is the only way now to get rid of him. I have tried to gather enough support from among the powerful men of the kingdom, but their commitment to our cause is weak at best. We cannot depend on them enough to risk my leaving the Church in an attempt to do battle with the King. Only an official order from the Pope can bring the needed forces to our side so that we can remove the traitor from the throne. He will have no way to defend against such an order from the Pope. Suggest in your letter to the king of Portugal that the Pope's order should state that anyone who remains loyal to dom Diogo will be banished from the Church and will therefore be unable to go to heaven. No one would dare disobey such an order.

Brother, be careful that your letter to the king of Portugal gets to him without the knowledge of dom Diogo and that the Pope's order be sent the same way. If dom Diogo knows in advance that the Pope will be sending an order removing him from the throne, he will have nothing to lose by killing us all.Brother, you must act quickly. I have heard that dom Diogo plans to send a Portuguese man to Rome to seek an order from the Pope canceling my right of sanctuary. If he persuades the Pope to give such an order, I will lose my life and our kanda will perish. Time is short. The traitor has already arrested our sister, which shows what he intends for all of us. We are all depending on you and know that you will do what is right.

Signed, dom Pedro

The Inquest

Imagine that you are a judge at the Royal Inquest of 1550. You must listen to the testimony given by seven witnesses. Use this page to take notes on their testimony. Then you must decide whether or not there is enough evidence to persuade the Pope in Rome that dom Pedro is guilty of treason.

Witness	Names	Notes
#1: João Eannes, Chapel Boy	dom Bastia, Pedro Alvares	
#2: dom Afonso, a government official		
#3: Venda, another Chapel Boy of Vera Cruz	dom Francisco, Lord Lumbu Lord Vunda Lord Kondongo Lord Banpa	
#4: dom Bastiam, a noble	dom Afonso, dom Francisco Lord Mpemba	
#5: dom Antonio, a government official	Lord Mpemba	
#6: dom João de Melo, the King's porter	dom Rodrigo	
#7: dom Mwene Wembo, an officer of the King		Term: *kanda*

Lesson Five

The Kandas

A. Objectives

- To define the term *kanda* and explain its function in Kongo politics.
- To describe the role and influence of the Portuguese and the Church in the workings of *kanda* politics.
- To explain the consequences for Kongo of Portuguese involvement in political struggles within Kongo.

B. Lesson Activities (Completion Time: 1–2 days)

1. Introductory Discussion

Have students share their definitions of the term kanda from the previous lesson. Place student ideas on the board. Note that this is a difficult term to define, since it has no real counterpart in Western politics. Have students reach a class consensus on a definition, which should include the idea that a kanda was basically an extended family. It included others outside the family who were allied to the family for political purposes, rather like a cross between an extended family and a political party.

2. *Kanda* Simulation

See "*Kanda* Simulation"—Instructions for Duplicating Materials (box, page 56).

a. Explain to students that they are going to simulate the workings of a kanda by role-playing the various positions within its hierarchy.

b. Distribute role cards (**Student Handout 11**) to students and explain the roles. Tell students that all the cards of one color represent the king's *kanda* while those of another color represent an opposing *kanda*. The one card that is a third color represents the Portuguese. Have all government officials hold their cards up and have the king state what he/she observes. (There are many officials in the government who are members of the opposition *kanda*.) Explain that this was a common situation in Kongo, especially early in a king's reign.

c. Review the rules (See **Student Handout 12** "*Kanda* Rules"). Answer any questions.

d. Explain that for purposes of the simulation, time will be condensed. Conversations and negotiations that historically would have taken place over a long

period of time and over a wide geographic area will be reduced to one room and 10-15 minutes. (Give students an exact time limit.)

e. Have students begin negotiating. During negotiations, the teacher exchanges the cards of students who are fired or promoted. At the end of the time limit, have students cease discussions and return to their seats.

f. Ask the opposition leader whether or not he/she will attempt a rebellion. If so, tell students that they must now, individually and without further discussion, decide whose side they will support in the coming conflict. Emphasize that when the time comes to choose, they may not wait to see which side seems to have the most support and then choose that side. When all students are ready, instruct all of the king's supporters to gather on one side of the room while the rebels gather on the opposite side. Have each side total the number of points on the role cards held by its supporters. (If the opposition *kanda* leader does not wish to attempt a rebellion, you may give students another block of time during which the opposition can attempt to gain more support.)

g. Have students return to their seats. Ask the king and the opposition leader to report their total number of points. The side with the most points wins.

3. ***Kanda* Simulation Follow-up**

a. Use "Conditions of Victory" (**Student Handout 14**) as a class handout or make it into a transparency and display on the overhead. Explain that there are several levels of success or failure, for both the *kandas* and individuals. Ask students to evaluate their performance in the simulation according to the conditions outlined on the transparency. Take a poll to see the distribution of outcomes.

b. If the winning side had the support of the Portuguese (which is likely), ask the leader of that side to state what he/she promised the Portuguese in return for their support. If the leader agreed to promise that all prisoners of war would be sold to Portuguese merchants, refer back to the conditions of victory and make this amendment. Anywhere where it says the losers are imprisoned or their fate is uncertain, change that to read "sold into slavery." Ask for a show of hands from students who, as a result of this change, find that they have been sold into slavery. Explain that these people and their descendants would be gone from Kongo forever, sold and exported to the Americas.

c. Again assuming that the winning side had the support of the Portuguese, ask the winning leader whether he/she sought out their support and why. In a follow-up question, ask whether the leader perceived that having the support of the Portuguese was important to his/her *kanda's* success.

4. Conclusion

Discuss with students some overall conclusions that can be drawn from the *kanda* simulation. These conclusions should include this basic idea: With the additional factor of Portuguese support added to the traditional *kanda*-based political system, the normal balance of power was upset to the point where it became difficult for a king to remain in power for very long. The result was intermittent periods of civil war for the remainder of Kongo's history. These conflicts provided many prisoners of war for sale into slavery and weakened the ability of the king of Kongo to deal with illegal slavers, both foreign and domestic.

"*Kanda* Simulation"—Instructions for Duplicating Materials

1. Determine how many cards for each role will be used in a given class. A proper balance in the distribution of roles is important to the success of the simulation. The following chart gives some typical distributions. The goal is to have a balance in which the support of the Portuguese player has a good chance of determining the winner of the conflict.

Class Size	King	King's *kanda* Gov't. Official	Other	Leader	Opposition *kanda* Gov't Official	Other	Portuguese
31	1	2	9	1	6	11	1
30	1	2	9	1	5	11	1
29	1	2	9	1	5	10	1
28	1	2	9	1	5	9	1
27	1	2	8	1	5	9	1
26	1	2	8	1	5	8	1

2. Duplicate enough copies of the role cards for the class. Three colors of paper or card stock should be used, one for each *kanda* and one for the Portuguese. Be sure to duplicate enough government official and *kanda* member cards to account for the possibility of government positions changing hands.

3. Make transparencies of "*Kanda* Rules" and "Conditions of Victory."

Kanda Role-Playing Cards

King (100 pts.)

Goal: Remain king.

Strategy: Gather enough support to defend against possible rebellions by other *kandas*.

To accomplish this you may:

- Work to maintain the loyalty of all of your government officials.
- Gain the support of the Portuguese and the Church.
- Fire any government official and replace him/her with someone else. If possible, replace government officials who belong to opposing *kandas* with members of your own *kanda*. (They are more likely to remain loyal to you.)

Kanda Leader (40 pts.)

Goals: Overthrow the king and become the new king. Prevent the destruction of your *kanda*.

Strategy: Gather enough support to overthrow the king. To accomplish this you may:

- Offer government positions to those who support you. (Remember that there are only ___ such positions.)
- Gain the support of the Portuguese and the Church.

Kanda Role-Playing Cards

Portugal and the Church (60 pts.)

Goals: Support the winning side if there is a rebellion. Gain at least 3 promises from the winning side (the side that ends up ruling Kongo.)

Strategy: Use your position to get as much as possible from the winning kanda. You may ask for the following things in return for your support:

- Special trade privileges that are favorable to Portugal (lower prices for Kongolese goods, higher prices for Portuguese goods).
- A promise that Kongo will only trade with Portugal and no other European nation.
- A promise that, in the event of a rebellion, all prisoners of war will be sold as slaves to Portuguese merchants.
- A promise of more support for the Christian Church and its clergy.

Member of the King's *kanda* (10 pts.)

Goals: Become a government official. Be on the winning side if there is a rebellion.

Strategy: Help support and gather support for your *kanda*. To accomplish this you may:

- Try to persuade the king to appoint you as a government official.
- Help persuade members of your kanda to remain loyal to the king.
- Persuade members of other kandas to remain loyal to the king.
- Help gain the support of the Portuguese and the Church.
- Join the rebellion if you decide that it is likely to succeed. (To do so, of course, would be treason.)

Kanda Role-Playing Cards

Member of the Opposition *Kanda* (10 pts.)

Goals: Become a government official. Be on the winning side if there is a rebellion.

Strategy: Help support and gather support for your *kanda*.
You may:

- Persuade other members of your kanda to rebel against the king. (Keep in mind that this is treason.)
- Persuade members of the king's kanda to join a rebellion against the king.
- Help persuade the Portuguese and the Church to support a rebellion against the king.
- Remain loyal to the king if you believe a rebellion will fail.

Government Official (20 pts.)

Goals: Keep your job. Be on the winning side if there is a rebellion. Have the king be from your own *kanda*.

Strategy: You would prefer to work for a king who is a member of your own kanda. But above all you want to keep your job.

Consider these options:

- If you remain loyal to the king and the king is not overthrown it is likely that you will keep your job.
- If you remain loyal to the king and the king is overthrown then you will probably lose your position (and maybe your life.)
- If you join in a rebellion against the king and the rebellion succeeds, you will probably keep your job.
- If you join in a rebellion against the king and the rebellion fails, then you will certainly lose your job and probably your life. (Rebellion against the king is treason.)

Kanda Rules

- You may not change *kandas*. However, your loyalty (or disloyalty) to the king is independent of your membership in a *kanda*.

- No one, including the king and the opposition leader, may prevent or interfere with any negotiations.

- You may not use threats or promises that do not relate to the historical situation. (For example, you cannot offer someone a piece of candy in return for their support.)

- Only the king may appoint or fire government officials. In this game there are only ____ government official positions. The king may not appoint more than this number and must replace any official he/she fires.

- Any government official who is fired by the king must turn in his/her role card to the teacher, who will issue him/her a new card. Similarly, anyone promoted to the job of government official must exchange his/her role card for one reflecting the new status.

Kanda Simulation
Conditions of Victory

For the *kanda*:

- The king's *kanda* wins if there is a rebellion and it fails. All the rebels are executed or imprisoned for treason, and their *kanda* is severely weakened or even destroyed.
- The opposition *kanda* wins if it successfully overthrows the king. The king is killed or imprisoned. The fate of other supporters is uncertain.
- The game ends in a tie if the opposition *kanda* decides not to attempt a rebellion.

For individuals:

Rate your level of success according to the following rubric:

Excellent:	You achieved all your goals. Your *kanda* won, or there was no rebellion.
Good:	You achieved some of your goals. Your *kanda* won, or there was no rebellion.
Fair:	You achieved *some* of your goals. Your *kanda* lost, but you survived.
Poor:	You achieved *none* of your goals. Your *kanda* lost, but you survived.
Terrible:	You achieved none of your goals. Your *kanda* lost, *and* you were executed or imprisoned.

Lesson Six
Mad Dog

A. Objectives

- Students will explain how slavers took advantage of political chaos to abduct people who would otherwise not have been targets of slavery.
- Students will explain connections between events in Kongo and the rising demand for slave labor in the Americas.
- Students will describe the long term consequences for Kongo and Africa that resulted from European influence and the slave trade.

B. Lesson Activities (Completion Time: 1-2 days)

1. Introductory Discussion

Review briefly the situation in Kongo as discussed at the end of lesson five. (Kongo's traditional political system had been disrupted by the Portuguese presence to the point that violent struggles for power among a number of *kandas* became more and more frequent.) Explain that one result of this political chaos was that it became easier for those engaged in the slave trade to obtain prisoners of war and to ignore laws and customs that normally protected ordinary Kongolese from being captured and sold into slavery. Tell students that the story of Mad Dog, set around 1785, is an example of one slaver who was particularly notorious.

2. Historical Fiction: "Mad Dog"

Distribute copies of "Mad Dog" (**Student Handout 14**). The story may be read individually or orally. After reading the story, ask students to summarize in their own words what happened.

3. Follow-up to "Mad Dog"

Have students discuss the story in small groups. Instruct them to focus on questions such as:

a. Nsala throws down his musket, disgusted and weary of being a soldier. Why?

b. Nimi deduces that Mad Dog may have been responsible for the attack on their outpost. What evidence did he use to arrive at that conclusion?

c. During the time of this story, Kongo was torn by civil war, with many factions fighting one another for control of the state. What made Mbwa Lau (Mad Dog) different from the others?

d. At the end of the story, Nsala picks up his musket and, along with Nimi, heads for their village. Why?

e. The story is clearly unfinished. Briefly describe what you think would have happened next. (This question could be extended to become a creative writing task with students assigned to compose a continuation and ending to the story.)

f. Mad Dog and others like him made life in Kongo more violent and dangerous than ever. What could have been done to stop him? Who could have brought his raids to an end?

4. **Class Discussion or Assignment: "Mad Dog and the Historical Record"**

Distribute copies of **Student Handout 15** "Mad Dog and the Historical Record" to students. Have students use this additional information as well as the historical fiction to deal with questions such as:

a. What event finally caused the rival factions in Kongo to agree to do something about Mad Dog? What does this say about the importance of the Portuguese Catholic Church in Kongo?

b. Why were the Portuguese upset by Mad Dog's activities? What does this say about Portuguese involvement in the slave trade by 1785?

C. Culminating Activity: "A House Divided"

Distribute to students copies of "A House Divided" (**Student Handout 16**). By way of introduction, explain to students that the story of Kongo is linked with the history of the United States. This activity explores that link and gives students an opportunity to demonstrate that they have mastered the key objectives of this unit.

Read and discuss the background information.

Assign the writing prompt as a final assessment for the unit.

Writing Prompt

When Abraham Lincoln said that "a house divided against itself cannot stand," he was referring to the fact that the United States was deeply divided on the issue

of slavery. The president believed that unless the nation was united, one way or the other, it would eventually disintegrate. Do you think Lincoln's observation was correct? Could the same principle of a "house divided" apply to the situation in Kongo?

Imagine that you could go back and visit the Kongo Kingdom in the early 1500s. What would you say to the king and other high-ranking Kongo leaders? What advice might you give in view of the emerging situation there?

Before you begin writing, think about what you have learned in this unit. Consider the sequence of events in Kongo, the changes that took place, and the results of those changes. Remember too, the role and influence of the Portuguese and the Catholic Church.

Now write a persuasive speech to be given before the King and other high-ranking Kongo leaders in the early 1500s. In this speech you must convince your audience of a course of action that will help Kongo avoid the problems that plagued its later history.

Mad Dog

Historical Fiction

Nimi dived face-down into the sodden, muddy soil and crawled on his belly into a tangle of brush and tall grass. He labored to slow his breathing and quiet the drumming of his heart. Less than a quarter of an hour ago, an explosive volley of musket fire ripped through the small valley outpost manned by Nimi and his comrades, shattering the stillness of the early morning. From the moment of that first intense volley, there was no question of trying to defend the outpost. The defenders quickly realized that the enemy, whoever he was, had them far outnumbered and, more importantly, outgunned. No order was needed or given—everyone ran for cover.

Nimi lay motionless as shouts and the crack of gunfire grew louder. The ground beneath him vibrated with the pounding of hundreds of running feet. Nimi held his breath as the attackers combed the marshy field, several passing dangerously close to his hiding place. Exhaling in relief as their voices faded into the distance, he waited several more minutes before cautiously raising himself up to peer over the tall grass. A haze of gun smoke blanketed the field. As wisps of smoke parted and drifted skyward, Nimi saw the last of the attackers heading north. Brushing some of the caked mud from his hands and face, he turned west and hurried towards the woods.

Darkness enveloped him as he stepped noiselessly into the comforting gloom of the thick forest canopy. He paused to allow his eyes time to adjust, then began to pick his way through the underbrush in search of a path to follow. A loud, metallic "click" sounded behind him, freezing him in his tracks. "Nimi!" whispered a familiar voice. "You make more noise than a water buffalo!"

Nimi turned to see his friend Nsala hiding in the low branches of a tree, his cocked musket pointed in Nimi's direction. "Don't you dare fire that thing, Nsala," Nimi hissed. "That horde of madmen will track us down for sure!"

"Don't worry ," Nsala said sheepishly, uncocking his musket. "It isn't loaded. I left the ammunition behind."

"Fine soldier you are!" Nimi mumbled nervously. "Running around with a musket and no bullets. What were you planning to do? Beat them over the head with it?"

"I don't know. It all happened so fast. What about you? Where is your bow?"

Nimi sighed. "What good is a bow against all those muskets? Honestly, I don't remember what I did with it." Shaking his head, he added ruefully, "A fine pair of soldiers we are!" Nsala groaned at Nimi's feeble attempt at humor and climbed down from the tree. A full head shorter than the tall, lanky Nimi, Nsala was also some years older and more powerfully built. Once on the ground, Nsala looked his friend in the eyes.

"I'm *not* a soldier and neither are you, Nimi. We're farmers, remember?" Tossing the useless musket to the ground, he continued, "I think I've had quite enough of this soldiering business. I wish the royal princes would stop fighting each other and let life in Kongo get back to normal."

"That's not very likely, Nsala. There are so many rival *kandas* and factions now, I don't see how anyone will be able to bring peace to Kongo anytime soon."

Nodding back in the direction they had come, Nsala said, "The pack of animals that attacked us was certainly well-armed—I think every one of them had a musket! Who do you suppose they were?"

Nimi chewed his lip as he considered the question. In all their previous clashes with various rebel groups, muskets were being used more and more. The idea of an entire army equipped with muskets was disturbing. "I wonder . . . ," Nimi finally answered. "Nsala, have you heard of Mbwa Lau—Mad Dog?"

"Mad Dog!" Nsala gasped. "Of course I've heard the stories. Everyone has. They say he fights only to capture people to sell as slaves. He makes war just for profit."

"Right! He wages war to make himself and his followers rich, which means, Nsala, that if all the stories are true, Mad Dog could afford to equip his men . . . all his men . . . with muskets."

The two friends stood silent for a minute, each considering the possible implications if indeed Mad Dog was responsible for overrunning their outpost. Nsala was the first to speak. "Nimi, our attackers were heading north, weren't they?"

"Yes, and if they continue that way, the village . . . "

"They won't attack the village; it's undefended! It has no military value."

"Mad Dog is not concerned with military value. Remember, it's the people he wants. He needs slaves."

Their eyes met briefly, and without another word, Nsala picked up his musket, and the two friends quickly headed north towards the village they both called home.

Mad Dog and the Historical Record

Documentary evidence of the story of Mad Dog is unclear. Historians know that Mad Dog took advantage of the political chaos in Kongo to set up a stockade or fort in a sort of no-man's land between rival factions within Kongo, one of them being that of the aged king. Because Mad Dog was selling his captives to middlemen trading with English, French, and Dutch merchants, his raids soon came to the attention of Portuguese Catholic Church officials. These middlemen were taking the slaves to be sold in Protestant countries, a situation that offended the Church. In addition, Portuguese merchants were losing business to this trade. So the Portuguese Bishop of Kongo persuaded the old king to issue an order telling Mad Dog to stop. The Bishop also pressured the king to order his people to sell slaves only to Portuguese Catholics. Then the Bishop sent a priest to Mad Dog's stockade to deliver the king's order.

Mad Dog responded by ordering his men to shoot at the priest. Although he was not hurt, the priest was forced to beat a hasty retreat. This event had the odd effect of briefly and tenuously uniting the rival *kandas*. Attacking a priest was considered a scandalous, criminal act, and so the rival factions came to an agreement to do something about Mad Dog. Unfortunately, we don't know exactly what they agreed to do or what in the end became of Mad Dog.

Whatever Kongo leaders did about Mad Dog, their actions had little impact on the thriving slave trade, which continued to drain Kongo and much of the rest of sub-Saharan Africa of both its people and its ability to resist further inroads by foreigners. By the late 1800s, virtually all of Africa, including Kongo, had fallen to European imperialism.

Much of Kongo was eventually absorbed into the Portuguese colony of Angola. Even so, reminders of the Kingdom of Kongo remain to this day. One of the many factions that fought for independence against the Portuguese beginning in the 1960s was based on the Kongo royal *kanda*. When the Portuguese finally withdrew from Angola in 1975, this group fought against its rivals for control of the new nation, a situation reminiscent of Kongo's long period of civil wars. Today, Angola is governed by one of those rival factions, and the threat of civil war still looms.

A House Divided

In 1483, Diogo Cão's Portuguese expedition made first contact with Kongo. Just nine years later, in 1492, Christopher Columbus, sailing for Spain, made first contact with the Americas. In the decades that followed his discovery, the Americas were explored by Europeans, and vast areas of land were opened for European settlement.

Because so much land was available in the Americas, 'plantation agriculture' was found to be one of the most economically advantageous ways to exploit the land. (A plantation is a single farm that covers a large territory and employs a large number of workers.) Unfortunately for the owners of these vast estates, few settlers were interested in taking low paying, backbreaking jobs so far from home. Beginning in the 1500's, some plantation owners solved this problem by purchasing Africans, who were then forcibly used to work the land. Because these slaves were not paid wages, plantation agriculture soon became highly profitable and plantation owners very wealthy. This led to an expansion of plantation agriculture and an ever-increasing demand for slaves to work the huge estates. By the time of Mad Dog in the late 1700s, the trade in African slaves had become a huge and highly lucrative business.

Slavery in the United States deeply divided the young nation. By the mid-1800s, many Americans, especially in the North, came to believe that slavery was immoral and should be abolished. As a result, many northern states outlawed slavery. But in the South, where the economy was based primarily on plantation agriculture and the majority continued to believe that slavery was both just and necessary, the system remained legal. In 1858, a few short years before the slavery issue plunged the nation into a bloody civil war, Abraham Lincoln quoted from the Bible in a speech. "A house divided against itself cannot stand," he declared. "I believe this government cannot endure permanently, half slave and half free."

Research and Extension Activities

1. The Kongolese were a Bantu-speaking people. Research the Bantu migrations. Where did Bantu-speaking people originate? Where did they migrate? How did they benefit from the knowledge of ironworking?

2. The daring Portuguese sea voyages of the fifteenth century were made possible by the development of the caravel, a new type of ship. Research the caravel to discover why this ship was an improvement over its predecessors. Write your findings in a short essay.

3. Diogo Cão was just one of several prominent Portuguese explorers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Research the names and accomplishments of other Portuguese explorers.

4. Research examples of Europeans making "first contact" with peoples in other parts of the world besides Kongo, for example the Japanese, Chinese, South Asians, Aztecs, Incas, Native Americans, Aborigines, or African groups other than the Kongolese.

5. In 1492, the Kongo Kingdom was flourishing. The manikongo (king) had just converted to Christianity and was corresponding with both the Pope and the King of Portugal. Research other events throughout the world in 1492. Write a short essay describing your findings.

6. Imagine that you are a Portuguese traveler visiting Kongo in the fifteenth century. Write a short letter home about some of the things you have seen and done.

7. Ethnocentrism is defined as the belief in the superiority of one's own ethnic group or culture over another. Do you think the Portuguese desire to convert the Kongolese to Christianity was ethnocentric? Support your answer.

8. Beatriz Kimpa Vita has sometimes been called the Kongolese Joan of Arc. Research both of these personalities and explain why this comparison has been made.

9. Nearly four hundred years after Diogo Cão's arrival in Kongo, Europeans were still interested in exploring Africa. Research the expeditions to Africa of one or more of the following: James Bruce, Mungo Park, René Caillié, Heinrich Barth, Samuel Baker, Richard Burton, John Speke, David Livingstone, and Henry Stanley.

10. Research the history of slavery. Compare and contrast traditional African patterns of slavery with those developed under the plantation system in the Americas.

11. Review the 1526 letter in which King Afonso of Kongo complained to the Portuguese king about the slave trade. Far from ending the trade, the king of Portugal answered Afonso by saying that Kongo had nothing else to sell and that if the Kongolese wished to continue receiving goods and services from the Portuguese they would have to continue to provide slaves in exchange. Imagine that the Portuguese king had sent a more favorable response to Afonso. Pretend you are the Portuguese king. Write this response in a short letter to Afonso.

12. In the 1700s and 1800s, many people in Europe and America began to speak out against slavery. These people became known as abolitionists because they favored abolishing, or ending slavery. Using what you have learned about the trans-Atlantic slave trade and how it affected the people of West Central Africa, write a speech that will persuade the government of your country to abolish slave trading.

13. Construct an illustrated timeline or storyboard of the history of the Kongo Kingdom.

14. Choose one aspect of Kongolese history and act as a *griot*, an African storyteller, to tell the tale. Present your story to the class.

15. Research other African states of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: Songhai, Benin, Zimbabwe, and the Swahili trading state of Kilwa. Make a chart in which you compare one or more of these states with Kongo.

16. Draw a map of Africa that shows the dates and locations of all the important kingdoms and states of pre-colonial times. Include a title, legend, scale, and orientation on your map.

17. Use the Internet to locate information about the modern countries of Angola, the Congo Republic, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

For dozens of additional activities on the world history of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, see *Bring History Alive! A Sourcebook for Teaching World History* (Los Angeles: UCLA, National Center for History in the Schools, 1996).

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